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General and complete disarmament**Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The development and use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) continue to increase.

Major dimensions of IED use are covered by international law: there seems to be no need for further restrictive measures. The problem lies predominantly in the massive, deliberate violations of international law by armed groups.

To effectively address the issue of IEDs at the national level, it is essential to have effective legislation, regulation and procedures in place. Close coordination among the different government departments and entities involved in addressing the issue of IEDs is important.

Ongoing and significant challenges entail preventing precursor materials that are available commercially and military munition stockpiles from being utilized in the development of IEDs.

Internationally, coordination and information-sharing, among Member States, international and regional organizations and the commercial sector, need to be strengthened.

The United Nations and other relevant international organizations such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the World Customs Organization and the International Committee of the Red Cross play a multifaceted role in assisting States in countering the growing threat posed by IEDs.

* A/71/150.



Contents

- I. Growth and impact of improvised explosive device (IED) attacks
- II. Production and delivery
- III. Addressing the IED issue

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/46, paragraph 16. Nineteen States submitted views pursuant to the same paragraph of the same resolution. Their views are available at www.un.org/disarmament/ieds.

I. Growth and impact of improvised explosive device (IED) attacks¹

2. Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are among the world's oldest types of weapons. Their use is regulated. In situations of conflict, warring parties may employ IEDs if they fully adhere to international humanitarian law, in particular the rules of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. Indiscriminate use or the targeting of the IEDs against civilians or civilian objects is strictly prohibited.²

3. There has been a marked increase in the unlawful use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), particularly by non-state armed groups and rogue individuals. Such IED attacks deliberately target concentrations of civilians to achieve a maximum effect of lethality, terror and societal disruption;³ and they currently occur globally on a scale of hundreds per month.⁴

4. Annually, IED attacks kill and injure more people than do attacks with any other type of weapon except firearms. A review of selected international media reports from 2011 to 2015 revealed more than 6,300 recorded IED explosions, resulting in over 105,000 casualties.⁵

5. The countries most affected by IED attacks are Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Syrian Arab republic. However, proliferation of IED use is an unmistakable trend: IEDs have recently been used from India to the United States of America, from Norway to Turkey, from Colombia to Belgium and from the Russian Federation to Thailand. About half of the world's countries have currently been impacted by IEDs (S/2014/41). In 2015 alone, suicide attacks involving IEDs occurred in over 10 per cent of Member States, a greater proportion than any recorded ever before.⁶

6. Several factors contribute to the growth in IED attacks. IEDs can be simple to design, and components remain cheap and easily accessible, including through criminal networks and porous borders, and as a result of corruption and poor ammunition stockpile management. Groups such as Da'esh, Al-Qaida and Boko

¹ For a recent overview of the issue of IEDs, see United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), "Addressing improvised explosive devices: options and opportunities to better utilize UN processes and actors" (Geneva, 2015), to which the present report is indebted. Available at www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/-en-641.pdf.

² Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Bobby Traps and Other devices as amended on 3 May 1996 (Amended Protocol II) (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2048, No. 22495) to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (ibid., vol. 1342, No. 22495).

³ The issue of the use of IEDs by government forces in violation of international humanitarian law, such as the barrel bombs dropped on Syrian populations (see, e.g., A/HRC/30/48), is also of great concern but falls outside of the scope of this report.

⁴ See www.cbrneportal.com/the-ubiquitous-threat-ieds-africa-and-the-world/.

⁵ See <https://aoav.org.uk/2016/counter-improvised-explosive-devices-c-ied-mapping/>.

⁶ See <https://aoav.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/AOAV-Explosive-Monitor-2015.pdf>.

Haram have recruited extensive cadres which can be trained to manufacture and use IEDs. Such groups often combine a deliberate disregard for international humanitarian law with the intention to wreak massive havoc. Precisely because these groups often aim at any gatherings of civilians, the locations of their victims are widespread and it is almost impossible to predict whom they will be.

7. In addition, terrorist groups have sometimes made enduring gains in territorial control, creating areas where sophisticated IED production facilities can go undetected for long periods of time.⁷ The financial and organizational prowess of several of these groups allows their IED manufacturers to continually adapt to counter-IED (C-IED) measures.

8. The spread of communications technology has greatly abetted IED knowledge-sharing.⁸ Online, groups share instructional videos or materials, both on IED construction and on execution of attacks.⁹ Currently, travel for IED-related training among organizations is also occurring.

9. Moreover, foreign fighters have been returning to their home countries or have crossed borders into third countries, bringing the skills learned in conflict zones with them. Returnees have formed cells and networks providing access to weapons and materials for IED construction, while capitalizing on acquired battlefield skills and explosives-related training.

10. In countries where strict weapons controls are in place, IEDs seem to form an increasingly attractive alternative or addition to illicit small arms.

Impact on civilians

11. The majority of IED attacks occur in populated areas, causing harm overwhelmingly to civilians. In the period 2011-2015, 82 per cent of recorded casualties were civilians.¹⁰ In Nigeria, suicide bombers caused the most civilian harm in 2015, with over 2,000 casualties in that year.¹¹ In Afghanistan, one of the world's most heavily landmine-contaminated countries, IEDs kill 10 times more civilians than do landmines.¹² Use of victim-activated IEDs is in some places on a scale akin to that of the minelaying of the twentieth century, with their being scattered over fields and roads to deny access to towns and infrastructure.

12. In some cases, IED attacks deliberately target civilian objects, including airports, markets, police stations, schools, public transit, commercial hubs, nightclubs, courts, political gatherings and sports venues, to ensure infliction of the greatest amount of civilian harm. In addition to producing large-scale carnage, such attacks can impede commerce, contribute to internal displacement and refugee flows, obstruct humanitarian responses and civil society activity, and disrupt the provision of health care, education and sanitation and the practice of governance.

⁷ Conflict Armament Research, "Inside Islamic State's improvised weapon factories in Fallujah" (London, 2016).

⁸ UNIDIR, "Addressing improvised explosive devices: options and opportunities to better utilize UN processes and actors".

⁹ S/2014/770, para. 19.

¹⁰ <https://aoav.org.uk/2016/counter-improvised-explosive-devices-c-ied-mapping/>.

¹¹ AOAV, <https://aoav.org.uk/explosiveviolence/nigeria/>.

¹² S/2015/289.

13. In addition to violating international humanitarian law, the use of IEDs against civilians affects the entire spectrum of their human rights, including the rights to life, physical security, education and health.¹³ Moreover, the socioeconomic impact on the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 1 and 16, can be significant. Political instability, destruction of infrastructure and the high costs of recovery and rehabilitation of livelihoods are key drivers feeding enduring poverty.

Children

14. Children are often among the victims of IEDs (S/2016/360). In Afghanistan and Iraq, IED attacks killed or injured almost 1,000 children in 2014 alone. Concentrations of children, including girls' schools, have been the targets of IED attacks. Unexploded and abandoned IEDs also pose a particular risk to children, with over 60 per cent of the casualties of explosive remnants of war (ERW), including IEDs, being under 18 years of age in 2014.¹⁴

15. Children are sometimes used in support roles, for transport and employment, as well as in IED combat activities such as the planting of the devices and suicide bombings. The number of children involved in suicide attacks in the Lake Chad basin rose from 4 in 2014 to 44 in 2015. More than 75 per cent of those children were girls. As suicide attacks involving children become commonplace, children are at risk of being seen as threats to the community's safety.¹⁵

Impact on the military and police

16. The use of IEDs represents a massive concern for the armed forces and security forces. In some countries, such as Mali and Somalia, IEDs are often used to assassinate politicians and kill uniformed personnel.

17. A situation of recurrent IED attacks creates an environment of sustained insecurity which saps the morale of security forces, hinders recruitment and impedes security sector reform.

18. Over the past decade, the need for IED threat mitigation has resulted in a profound change in military priorities, tactics and strategy, often involving the incurring of mammoth costs. The transformations range from increased use of helicopters over vehicles, extensive overhaul of training and sweeping battlefield treatment changes, to the emergence of a multibillion dollar industry encompassing surveillance, counter-intelligence, computer analysis, ground-penetrating radar, electrical jamming, body and vehicle armour, and computerized prostheses.

¹³ See www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/AF/ProtectionCiviliansAnnualReport2015.pdf, and www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/IQ/UNAMIRReport1May31October2015.pdf.

¹⁴ Cluster Munition Coalition and International Campaign to Ban Landmines, "Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor: The impact of mines/ERW on children", November 2015. Also, according to the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, in 2014, 60 per cent of all casualties from explosive remnants of war (ERW) were children.

¹⁵ See www.unicef.org/media/media_90827.html.

Impact on United Nations personnel, including peacekeepers

19. IEDs pose grave threats to the safety of United Nations personnel. These threats are now common, as the United Nations is increasingly called upon to intervene in violent environments where there is no formal peace agreement or even a peace to keep.¹⁶ In addition, United Nations personnel and peacekeepers are indirectly impacted by IEDs intended to cause damage to parties engaged in conflict.

20. The United Nations has been the target of IED attacks at residences and offices and against vehicles, to devastating effect. The year 2015 witnessed 38 direct attacks against United Nations personnel and peacekeepers, resulting in fatalities, injuries and damage to property, in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Pakistan, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen.

21. The presence of IEDs seriously impedes the ability of the United Nations to deploy and effectively fulfil its mandates. This results in delay or the reduced capacity of the United Nations to deliver crucial life-saving humanitarian and development programmes. It restricts force mobility, hampering logistics, patrolling, peace monitoring and engagement with leaders of factions and local communities. United Nations personnel and peacekeepers operating in a high-threat IED environment require significantly more resources, for example, rotary-wing aircraft and armoured vehicles, as well as specialized training and medical support. This substantially increases the costs and logistical challenges faced, while reducing operational tempo. At the September 2015 Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping, "better protection against IEDs and improved information and analysis" featured prominently on the Secretary-General's list of necessities for which every nation should consider providing support.

Impact on political processes

22. IED attacks can also impact on political processes when they are used to attain power, claim territorial control, disrupt elections and target individuals and institutions, including the United Nations.

Impact on humanitarian relief efforts

23. Attacks on humanitarian personnel can either be direct or take the form of sequential attacks on first responders after they have arrive on the scene of an incident. Such attacks affect the delivery of humanitarian and food-related assistance and the safe return of internally displaced persons and refugees, as well as the socioeconomic recovery of affected nations. IEDs that remain undetonated on

¹⁶ See www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/pr/15-11-11-UN-IACG-MA-Statement-on-Improvised-Explosive-Devices-IEDs-APII.pdf

urban or rural terrain can block humanitarian access to vulnerable populations and vital infrastructure, and hinder reconstruction efforts.¹⁷

24. Over the last decade, hundreds of humanitarian workers have been killed or injured by IEDs.¹⁸ Nearly one third of the incidents occurred in Afghanistan, where one quarter of non-governmental organizations have had staff that were killed or injured by IEDs; and one third of those organizations have pulled entire operations from specific areas owing to IED threats.¹⁹ Humanitarian organizations spend increasing amounts of their budget on their own security in order to ensure adequate protection for their personnel.

II. Production and delivery

25. IEDs are assembled outside of military production or mainstream commercial channels, by individuals or groups. The United Nations defines an IED as “a device placed or fabricated in an improvised manner incorporating explosive material, destructive, lethal, noxious, incendiary, pyrotechnic materials or chemicals designed to destroy, disfigure, distract or harass” which “may incorporate military stores, but are normally devised from non-military components”.²⁰ Bomb makers strive continuously to alter the characteristics, functioning or delivery context of a device.

26. IEDs generally consist of a switch, power source, initiator, container and explosives. Initiation methods include time-controlled, command-initiated, radio-controlled, and victim-operated systems. Main charges can be drawn from commercial or military explosives. Casings can range from soda cans, plastic bags, pressure cookers and shoeboxes to suicide vests, gas cylinders and trucks. In some instances, booby traps meet the definition of an IED as well.

27. IEDs can be statically deployed or hand-launched, delivered by vehicle, boat, aircraft, or rocket launcher or by mail or strapped to a person or animal.

Military components

28. IED components can be sourced from conventional munitions, such as artillery shells, mortar bombs and landmines, which are found in government and non-state actor stockpiles and abandoned military positions, and in explosive remnants of war both in conflict areas and where active hostilities have ceased. Effectively addressing the sourcing of military components entails ensuring that surplus munitions are systematically identified and disposed of, stockpiles are secured, and explosive remnants of war are cleared.

¹⁷ Agnès Marcaillou, “United Nations overview of the improvised explosive device situation and reflections of a coherent response”, statement by the Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service, International Counter Improvised Explosive Device Leaders Forum, Canberra, 3 September 2015. Available at www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/documents/20150903%20C-IED%20Conference.pdf.

¹⁸ See Action on Armed Violence (https://prezi.com/z_v78pwayuaj/ccw-humanitarian-harm-and-ieds/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 04.10 3.137; see also IATG 01.40:2011.

Commercial components

29. Often, the components used in IEDs are easily obtainable commercial goods, such as fertilizer, bleach (peroxide), nail polish remover, brake fluid, herbicides, disinfectants and cleaning solvents. Their trade, transfer and storage are typically subjected to a lesser degree of scrutiny and regulation than the transfer and storage of munitions. Commercial explosives and detonators for mining and construction are also sought-after components. IEDs may be packed with additional materials, such as nails or ball bearings, to enhance fragmentation. Enhancements may also include copper plates, which can threaten the integrity of armoured vehicles and pose a particular threat to peacekeepers.

30. Research on IEDs has not revealed direct transfers of commercial goods from legal manufacturers to armed groups. Rather, small local trade entities, having obtained dual-use goods from regional distribution companies, appear to be the weakest link in the chain of custody.²¹

31. Effectively addressing the sourcing of commercial components means ensuring that commercial explosives are regulated in conformity with international law, that businesses involved with commercial goods that can form components of IEDs are recurrently made aware of the risks of their trade and of effective measures to lower those risks, and that government and industry engage in international coordination and cooperation.

III. Addressing the IED issue

32. Arms control and arms regulation are measures under which governments regulate their arsenals, secure their stockpiles or prevent diversion of their weapons and ammunition to illicit markets. Separate multilateral agreements exist for many weapons categories. In the area of small arms, in addition to ownership by government forces, civilian possession may be allowed, but, there also, government regulations apply, typically on the basis of a licensing system. IEDs stand out as a category because their production and trade typically take place wholly outside government controls. A traditional approach regulating governmental production, trade and use of weapons in this category on the basis of a multilateral weapons-specific agreement therefore has only limited value.

33. Instead, addressing the issue of IEDs will have to focus on the capacity of Governments to effectively bring together several policy strands for comprehensive action. The impact of IEDs touches upon areas ranging from inner-city development, security and customs controls to violent extremism, forced displacement and public health; from law enforcement, child protection and commercial mining to military stockpile management, agriculture and aviation security. Owing to the extent of the cross-cutting nature of the issue, a whole-of-government approach is essential for making progress in dealing with IED threats.

34. At the level of international organizations, the architecture mirrors the national multifaceted configuration and is similarly fragmented. Organizations across many sectors have mandates and expertise that can contribute to a useful set of IED mitigation measures. Therefore, also at the global level, it is essential for

²¹ See, e.g., "Inside Islamic State's improvised weapon factories in fallujah" (see old footnote 7).

stakeholders to acknowledge the added value of the various processes and actors, and to invest significantly in coordination and information exchange.

35. Efforts to address the issue of IEDs can be grouped under four main categories: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. IED threat mitigation efforts should always ensure that humanitarian organizations and activities are never perceived as being part of a conflict.

Prevention

Controlling commercial precursors

36. Regulatory frameworks for commercial explosives and for dual-use goods such as fertilizers exist in many countries. However, gaps remain and enforcement is often deficient.

37. Some States have introduced programmes designed to make retailers aware of the risk of precursor abuse, to encourage them to secure their fertilizer, report any suspicious purchase or enquiry and keep records of transactions.

Recommendation 1

Rigorous government scrutiny of commercial sectors from which IED components are sourced is essential, including at the local level. In particular, a regulatory framework over precursor materials, such as fertilizers and detonators for the mining and construction industry, should be in place. Purchase information on large or suspicious transactions of precursor materials should be recorded nationally, and shared internationally, where relevant.

Industry and retail organizations and communications companies should be encouraged to develop national and international codes of conduct to assist such regulatory framework.

Global Shield

38. Programme Global Shield, managed by the World Customs Organization (WCO), in partnership with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), monitors the international movement of 14 chemical explosive precursors which pose the greatest risk for the manufacture of explosives. In addition, cross-border movements are monitored for fuses, igniters and detonators. When national customs agencies identify suspicious movement or seize material, WCO and the customs administrations participating in the programme are notified when needed, and a warning message is generated to INTERPOL. In such cases, INTERPOL engages with relevant national central bureaux with the aim of collecting additional information that could be beneficial in cross-border, multi-agency investigations.

39. UNODC contributes to Global Shield by enhancing the capacities of national law enforcement and criminal justice authorities in developing necessary policy and organizing the surveillance of storage and movement of dual-use chemical materials within a country, particularly as related to the 14 precursor chemicals used for IEDs.

40. Under this programme, over 90 countries have shared real-time information on cross-border movements of high-risk explosive precursor chemicals. Global Shield

includes capacity-building of States and assists in improving communication between customs and other law enforcement agencies. Practical tools available include explosive identification kits and identification devices for chemicals and explosives.

INTERPOL CHASE Programme

41. The INTERPOL Chemical Anti-Smuggling Enforcement (CHASE) programme counters the smuggling of chemicals used in the manufacture of weapons. CHASE increases the capacity of police, customs, immigration and chemical and border security agencies through training sessions and a multinational operation.

42. The INTERPOL Chemical Risk Identification and Mitigation Programme (CRIMP) aims towards developing the capacity of countries to identify the regional risk posed by the chemical warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals and their precursors obtained and used by non-state actors.

Recommendation 2

Programme Global Shield and the INTERPOL CHASE and CRIMP programmes provide an excellent infrastructure for functioning international cooperation on controlling explosive precursors. The programmes would benefit from higher-level participation by States, and from further financial and technical support from States in a position to provide such support.

Preventing diversion of military materials

43. In effectively preventing the access of IED manufacturers to military munitions, three actions are key: securing munitions stockpiles, disposing of surplus munitions, and clearing and destroying landmines and explosive remnants of war.

Stockpile management

44. Armed forces' munitions depots are a major source of illicit munitions and explosives used in manufacturing IEDs.²² Stocks are susceptible to diversion if they are not appropriately secured and managed. Many armed forces, while possessing vast munitions stockpiles, lack the ability to engage in thorough planning and to focus attention consistently on safe and secure storage, handling, transportation and disposal. Poor national inventory practices mean that surpluses cannot be identified, leading to extensive build-ups of frequently unnecessary munitions stockpiles.²³

Disposal of surpluses

45. A central element in adequate stockpile management is the identification of surpluses, i.e., the munitions that do not constitute an operational need. When surpluses are not recognized, the entirety of the national stockpile may continue to be viewed as of operational value. Although not used, ammunition surpluses thus continue to fill warehouses and to pose a grave risk.

46. Generally, it is preferable to destroy surplus weaponry than to store it.²⁴ In post-conflict settings, the immediate destruction of surplus weapons and munitions

²² See A/63/182.

²³ See S/2015/289.

²⁴ See A/CONF.192/15.

eliminates possible new instability of fuel and its use in making IEDs. Also, properly securing and maintaining stockpiles require funding and organizational capacity, which are often scarce in post-conflict settings and result in the diversion of resources away from urgently needed recovery and development efforts. Thus, when the costs of destruction are measured against the costs associated with safe long-term storage and maintenance, destruction tends to be seen as economically advantageous as well.²⁵

Clearing explosive remnants of war

47. One of the risks associated with unexploded ordnance left behind after conflict is its possible use in connection with IED components, as is the case in Libya. Apart from direct humanitarian considerations, this is an additional argument for prompt clearance.

Recommendation 3

Defective stockpile management has been assessed as the norm rather than as the exception in many developing countries and in States recovering from armed conflict. In those circumstances, it is not only surplus stocks that should be the focus of attention, but the lack of appropriate policies and management processes behind this situation. Governments remain unaware of surpluses; their national stockpiles remain a risk to public safety and continue to be possible source of IEDs. Adequate munitions stockpile management and swift destruction of surplus munitions — in all countries of a challenged region — should be a priority in mitigating the threat posed by IEDs.

Recommendation 4

In granting export licences for munitions, any exporting country should weigh the receiving country's ability to sustainably secure its ammunition stockpiles, for instance, by effectively applying international guidelines to that end.

Recommendation 5

Member States should provide the necessary support to relevant international and regional organizations to strengthen implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (A/CONF.192/15, chap. IV), particularly through weapons and ammunition management using authoritative standards such as the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG).

Addressing violent extremism

48. To diminish the frequent use of IEDs by armed groups, often in settings of extremist violence, the conditions contributing to the emergence of violent extremism need to be addressed early on. Measures to counter violent extremism must always be complemented with preventive action. Overwhelmingly, IED use seems to be initiated by young males. Addressing the root causes of this

²⁵ UNIDIR, *Costs of Disarmament: Cost-Benefit Analysis of SALW Destruction versus Storage* (United Nations publication, Sales No. G.V.E.06.0.13).

phenomenon and making prevention an integral part of a comprehensive approach will help in tackling a number of the underlying conditions that drive individuals to join violent extremist groups. The Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism provides guidance to that end.

Recommendation 6

Good governance, compliance with human rights and the rule of law, effective measures and mechanisms for addressing marginalization and grievances of specific groups, including minorities and women, and promoting sustained and inclusive socioeconomic growth should be seen as essential elements of the process of addressing the issue of IEDs.

Preparedness

Setting norms, standards and policies

International law

49. For a discussion of relevant instruments of international law, see the study by UNIDIR cited at the beginning of this report,²⁶ and the Compilation of existing guidelines, best practices and other recommendations aiming at addressing the diversion or illicit use of materials which can be used for Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), compiled in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.²⁷

50. The main instruments of international law regarding IEDs are described in the table directly below.

²⁶ UNIDIR, "Addressing improvised explosive devices".

²⁷ [www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/55E574B550D10D00C1257A78006B2196/\\$file/IEDs+Compilation.pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/55E574B550D10D00C1257A78006B2196/$file/IEDs+Compilation.pdf).

	<i>IED-related purpose</i>	<i>Number of States parties</i>
CCW APII ²⁸	Prohibition in conflict to use "devices that are designed or of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering", "against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians or civilian objects" or in an "indiscriminate" manner Prohibition to use "devices that are attached to or associated with: internationally recognized protective emblems, corpses or graves, medical facilities or transportation; object intended for children, food or beverage; objects of a religious character; historic monuments, works of art or places of worship, animals or their carcasses;" "in any city, town, village or other area containing a similar concentration of civilians in which combat between ground forces is not taking place or does not appear to be imminent, unless: (a) such weapons are placed on or in close vicinity of a military objective, or (b) measures are taken to protect civilians from their effects, for example, the posting of warning sentries or the issuing of warnings"; operational information exchange and following the cessation of active hostilities, other devices are to be cleared	102
CCW Protocol V 30	Clearance, operational information exchange; victim assistance plan of action; voluntary best practices in annex	91
Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (United Nations, <i>Treaty Series</i> , vol. 2122, No. 36984)	Make commercial explosives detectable by chemically marking them; prohibits storage of unmarked explosives	153
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (United Nations, <i>Treaty Series</i> , vol. 2056, No. 35597)	Prohibitions, clearance; operational information exchange; victim assistance; mine/ERW risk education	162
Convention on Cluster Munitions (United Nations, <i>Treaty Series</i> , vol. 2688, No. 47713)	Prohibitions, clearance, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, risk education	108
International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (United Nations, <i>Treaty Series</i> , vol. 2149, No. 37517)	Criminalizes terrorist bombings	168

²⁸ Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 (Amended Protocol II) to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. CCW Protocol V: Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2399, No. 22495).

	<i>IED-related purpose</i>	<i>Number of States parties</i>
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, <i>Treaty Series</i> , vol. 2515, No. 44910.	Victim assistance, freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse	165
Security Council resolution 1373 (2001)	Criminalizes financial and other support to terrorism; to cooperate with other Governments in the investigation, detection, arrest, extradition and prosecution of those involved in terrorist acts	Binding for all States
Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)	Requires Governments to prevent non-State actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using weapons of mass destruction and related materials	Binding for all States

51. In addition to these specific instruments, international human rights law clearly lays out the obligations of States to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all individuals under their jurisdiction.

52. Major aspects of IED use are covered by international law. Use of IEDs is governed by international humanitarian law (in armed conflict) and by international human rights law. The only existing directly relevant legal instrument that explicitly mentions IEDs is the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 (Amended Protocol II) to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. There seems to be no need for further restrictive measures; however, the adherence to the instruments of international law is far from universal, as only 102 States have ratified this Protocol. The problem lies predominantly in the massive, deliberate violations of international law by armed groups. One of the key responses to the IED issues is international, national and local stigmatization of their use which could serve as a deterrent to those armed groups which are seeking political legitimacy or support within a local community.

Recommendation 7

Instruments of international law directly relevant for addressing the issue of IEDs need universal adherence and compliance. States that have not yet done so should accede to these instruments as a matter of urgency. This would further strengthen the international legal regime and allow a State to make full use of the related implementation arrangements as a possible part of national IED strategies. States parties to relevant international humanitarian law instruments should actively promote adherence to those treaties so as to uphold the norms that safeguard humanity.

Recommendation 8

In accordance with the Paris Principles, States should regard children accused of crimes under international law allegedly committed while they were associated with armed forces and armed groups, primarily as victims of

offences against international law, and not only as perpetrators.²⁹ They must be treated in accordance with international law in a framework of restorative justice and social rehabilitation.

53. At the level of international policy, IEDs are addressed through resolutions of the General Assembly (in particular resolutions 70/46 and 70/80) and the Security Council, and policies of respective United Nations entities and other international organizations.

Peace operations

54. The deliberate targeting of peacekeepers with IEDs has been one of the factors influencing the profound changes under way in peace operations. Relevant responses by the United Nations system include enhanced security threat assessment and management tools, a consolidation of all Secretariat security resources under the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) and the provision of on-demand specialized training and guidance, for example pre- and post-deployment training, the provision of equipment to troop-contributing countries, development of IED-specific training for United Nations civilian staff, and IED defeat (IEDD) training to engineering/explosive ordnance disposal companies.

55. While mitigation activities are intrinsic to countering the threat posed by IEDs, the focus of United Nations peace operations is on force protection, the safety and security of personnel and the effective implementation of the mandate, including, where relevant, the protection of civilians. The United Nations does not directly engage in military counter-terrorism operations; however, it must be capable of operating safely and effectively in environments where asymmetric tactics, such as those entailing use of IEDs, are employed (see A/70/357-S/2015/682).

56. While the United Nations develops standards on which training should be based, and identifies the capabilities and equipment required for peacekeepers, Member States deploying uniformed personnel to peace operations continue to bear responsibility for ensuring that military and police operating in high-risk environments are properly prepared before deployment and have the appropriate equipment combined with the tactics, techniques and procedures necessary to do so effectively.

Recommendation 9

When deciding on peace operations mandates, the Security Council should take into account the situational context of the IED threat and, when relevant, include comprehensive IED threat mitigation measures.

57. At the level of tools and guidelines, the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) provide a global guiding framework of good practice for mine action, which includes IED threat mitigation. The International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) are technical standards for safe and secure ammunition life-cycle management. While the Mine Action Standards do not specifically address IEDs, standards such as IATG can assist those stakeholders in search of authoritative humanitarian good practices for preventing the diversion of munitions.³⁰

²⁹ www.unicef.org/emerg/files/ParisPrinciples310107English.pdf.

³⁰ www.mineactionstandards.org/; www.un.org/disarmament/un-saferguard/guide-lines.

58. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat is developing an explosive ordnance disposal military unit manual and an IED Threat Mitigation Military and Police HQ Handbook. These doctrines-based publications, developed through consultation with Member States, will focus on enhancing the capacity of troop contributors in support of peacekeeping operations and will provide an operational uniformed staff functions reference guide to support the understanding, planning and execution of IED threat mitigation activities in United Nations peacekeeping.

59. Internal Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Threat Mitigation in Mission Settings Guidelines, issued in 2016, put forward a set of planning and coordination items for consideration in the development of a coherent response by peace operations to reducing the impact of IEDs on United Nations personnel and assets. Rather than outline operational tactics or provide guidance on the development of a comprehensive IED mitigation response, these Guidelines codify United Nations operational best practices on IED threat mitigation and constitute the framework for a comprehensive United Nations strategy.

60. Recently, the United Nations also revised the United Nations Security Policy Manual to address IED threats,³¹ and updated the Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War Safety guidance.³²

61. The threat posed by IEDs to the United Nations is the subject of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) Policy on Improvised Explosive Devices (Security Policy Manual, chap. 4, sect. Y). It outlines roles and responsibilities for officials of the United Nations Security Management System in-country in the management of the security risks posed by IEDs.

62. In the humanitarian field, the General Assembly has noted the pressing humanitarian need when non-state actors deploy IEDs, along with the humanitarian threat posed by IEDs in a post-conflict environment (resolution 70/80). Member States with the capacity to do so are called upon, along with the United Nations, to provide affected countries with the information and technical, financial and material assistance necessary to locate, remove and destroy IEDs. UNMAS and other entities provide training, equipment and capacity-building in the area of IED threat mitigation to affected States and peacekeeping missions. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) proffers support to States in the area of risk education and in developing injury surveillance systems to protect children and their communities.

63. IED awareness is also integrated into the Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE) training for staff safety in a number of countries, which is required by all United Nations staff. The UNHCR Emergency Handbook has integrated IED responses in its staff instructions.³³

64. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism maintains a directory of recommended international practices, codes and standards, which includes attention to eliminating

³¹ See "United Nations overview of the improvised explosive device situation and reflections of a coherent response" (see footnote 17).

³² See www.mineaction.org/resources/unmas-applications.

³³ <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/34680/dealing-with-critical-incidents-and-trauma-staff>.

the supply of weapons to terrorists, transfer controls for arms and explosives, and control programmes designed to detect and prevent the smuggling of weapons.³⁴

65. In 2015, the Thirty-second International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent adopted a resolution on the safety and security of humanitarian volunteers, urging relevant actors to provide them with protection, training, support, and insurance to help minimize and address the range of risks that they face in their efforts.³⁵

Recommendation 10

Peace operations should fully implement the Guidelines on IED Threat Mitigation in Mission Settings in a timely manner.

Recommendation 11

Drawing from existing International Mine Action Standards, the United Nations shall develop international IED defeat standards through consultation with Member States.

National legislation, regulations and procedures

66. States need to ensure that they have effective legislation, regulations and procedures in place which allow them to address the IED issue in a holistic manner. Given the involvement of various government entities, a national self-assessment may assist in mapping existing measures and identifying gaps.

Recommendation 12

Information derived from all relevant sectors of government should provide an overview of those areas in need of strengthening with regard to the issue of IEDs.

Recommendation 13

In order for the issue of IEDs to be effectively addressed, it is essential to comprehend the importance of actions needed at the local and community levels. Through activities ranging from awareness-raising with local retailers and intelligence-gathering to establishing de-radicalization programmes, national Governments will need to engage continuously with local authorities and groups.

Recommendation 14

States are encouraged to support the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in developing a voluntary self-assessment tool which can assist States in self-identifying gaps and challenges in national IED regulation and preparedness.

Coordinating at the national and international level

67. At the national level, information exchange among police, customs and military communities is often inadequate. Functioning national coordination

³⁴ www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/practices.html.

³⁵ See ICRC resolution 32IC/15/R5 (2015).

structures, underpinned by secure channels for day-to-day exchanges of operational information, are essential.

68. At the international level, existing tools and resources are dispersed over numerous entities, while until recently, there was no formal venue where the issue of IEDs in all its aspects could be discussed by all Member States. Through the adoption of a General Assembly resolution on the issue of IEDs, States have created such a central venue.

Recommendation 15

In their annual discussion within the General Assembly on the resolution on IEDs, States could, in particular, focus on matters of coordination between the various initiatives and approaches already existing, within the United Nations and beyond. If needed, such discussions could be prepared through open, informal meetings preliminary to the drafting and submission of the Assembly resolution. This would be an inclusive and highly cost-effective process.

Recommendation 16

In striving to diminish duplication of work at the global level and to maximize the comparative advantages of various multilateral bodies, States may wish to concentrate and consolidate activities within certain organizations and processes. For instance, activities in the technical areas under humanitarian mine action, such as clearance, victim assistance, risk education and stockpile management, apply as much to IEDs arising from conflict as they do to other explosive remnants of war; therefore, current mine action processes include the IED threat and support the coordination of the United Nations humanitarian response.

Databases

69. The General Assembly has called for the engagement by all Member States in a comprehensive and coordinated community of action to counter the global threat posed by IEDs (resolution 70/46). Databases are important instruments for coordination, information exchange and capacity-building. At the same time, given the sensitive subject matter of IEDs, there are limits to the amount of information that can be openly shared. Some international databases require a secure environment with limited government access. Proper deliberation is needed to determine in which web environment such databases should be established; in this regard, the General Assembly has encouraged steps "to harmonize diverse ongoing efforts" (resolution 70/46, para. 15).

Recommendation 17

Databases on the issue of IEDs seem best placed in intergovernmental institutions with global or near-global membership, whose websites will be visited by officials for other authoritative information as well and where year-on-year maintenance is ensured and secure information channels are available for sensitive data.

Recommendation 18

To maximize synergies, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, supported by other relevant United Nations entities, should establish an online hub providing impartial, authoritative guidance on information relevant to addressing the issue of IEDs in a comprehensive manner. The hub would include the four main topics covered in the present section, thus facilitating navigation, without duplication, towards existing tools presenting good practices, inside and outside of the United Nations system, and filling gaps, where needed.

Recommendation 19

Several countries maintain a publicly available national database on detonator manufacturers. Combining this national information in one global repository would strengthen possibilities for investigative and prosecutorial action. Such a database could include the name and contact information of manufacturers, and the characteristics of their serial numbers and other distinguishing markings. As this would be a tool for operational use mainly by law enforcement, it would be best established in INTERPOL.

Collecting data, sharing information

Data collection

70. Incident and casualty data linked to the use of IEDs is often difficult to obtain (S/2014/41). The information on IEDs that is collected tends to be fragmentary — and restricted, e.g., to meeting military, commercial or humanitarian needs — and based on different methodologies, with source material being available only in a limited number of languages. This makes meaningful comparisons and analysis often impossible. In order to address the issue of different definitions of IEDs and a lack of disaggregation (by incident type, weapon type or detailed data on victims and impacts), UNMAS has produced an IED Lexicon.³⁶

71. Accurate and detailed information related to IED incidents is essential for developing effective responses to the threats posed by IEDs. In addition to contributing to law enforcement, judicial proceedings and military operations, high-quality data sets could assist in developing effective responses so as to minimize civilian casualties and attending to the needs of victims.

72. Existing data-collection mechanisms on explosives have begun to also collect casualty data derived from incidents involving IEDs.³⁷ As demonstrated through the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in IED data collection, consistent collection using adequate disaggregation could inform IED mitigation strategies, hold users to account and advocate measures designed to reduce civilian casualties.

73. To improve its reporting and situational analysis in peace operations, the United Nations is currently developing the UN SAGE reporting tool. It allows for the standardization of incident reporting across all missions.

³⁶ Available at <http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/UNMAS%20IED%20Lexicon.pdf>.

³⁷ For example, the data-collection mechanism for the United Nations Strategy on Mine Action 2013-2018 collects casualty data from incidents involving IEDs.

Recommendation 20

An annual publication with an overview of IED-related data per country, allowing also for regional- and global-level assessments, would be valuable for developing adequate and measurable policy responses. It would be important for such a recurring publication to draw on sources in a variety of languages. As data collection is central to developing informed decision-making on IED issues, States are encouraged to sustainably fund possible initiatives in this direction.

Recommendation 21

The United Nations should continue to build on data collection and analysis already undertaken and to develop an IED-related technical database with the support of Member States in a position to provide such support.

Research

74. Areas where more research is needed include:

- Rationales and narratives of armed groups on the use of IEDs
- Tracing IED components
- Regional specificities in IED production and use
- Diminishing the explosive properties of fertilizers
- Interventions and success in IED threat reduction
- Sociopolitical and economic effects of IED use

Impact on vulnerable groups, including women and children

- Role of civil society in combating the rise of IED use

Recommendation 22

Further research on various dimensions of IED issues, including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, can help inform a better understanding of the multifaceted approach required to address the issue of IEDs. UNIDIR, along with other relevant research institutions, could be engaged by States in such tasks.

Information-sharing

75. Sharing of information on IED incidents, on devices and components, on suspicious activities involving explosives and on individuals and networks involved in IED use improves the planning and policy formulation of IED mitigation, informs training and capacity development, helps identify trends and patterns in IED use and construction, and facilitates the mapping of IED networks. It is often the case, however, that at the national level, different intelligence, police, border control and military agencies have not yet established adequate cooperation patterns.

76. In addition, as IED threats are rarely purely national ones, exchanges of intelligence information between countries are essential. A lack of trust regarding sensitive intelligence, including within friendly alliances, often prohibits such

cooperation. Shortage of resources for collecting and analysing data on IEDs can compound the issue.

77. Within the context of sanctions against Da'esh and Al-Qaida, the Security Council has noted the need to enhance coordination and information-sharing, both between Member States and between Governments and the private sector, so as to prevent the flow of IED components such as chemical components, detonators and detonating cords (Council resolution 2255 (2015)).

Recommendation 23

For secure operational information-sharing, States may use the INTERPOL I-24/7 network and the WCO CENcomm network, wherever possible.

78. The INTERPOL Project WATCHMAKER provides operational and specialized support to all of its 190 member countries through the issuing of INTERPOL Notices and warning messages on individuals known to manufacture or employ IEDs. Currently, the WATCHMAKER database includes over 1,000 bomb-maker profiles from 25 countries, allowing authorities to exchange biometric data and document records. In this context, INTERPOL has so far issued over 700 Notices, including 176 Red Notices for wanted persons involved in IED incidents, and 67 INTERPOL-Security Council Special Notices related to individuals targeted by Security Council sanction regimes. INTERPOL Purple Notices — focused on *modus operandi* — are issued with a view to sharing technical information on IEDs, based on information directly provided and updated by member countries' authorities.

79. Within the context of the informal Group of Experts on Improvised Explosive Devices under Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects, States exchange information on technical developments, on risk awareness and on IED-related incidents, and are establishing a network of national points of contact.

80. The Axon Global IED Partnership aims at encouraging nations and jurisdictions to reduce the barriers to information-sharing. Basic post-event IED data are shared in a repository. Currently, some 12 countries and several international organizations including UNMAS and INTERPOL are participating in this pilot project.

Recommendation 24

Initiatives to create international platforms for information exchange should first assess which forum is best placed for which type of information exchange.

Recommendation 25

Where possible, the development of globally-applicable standards or guidelines should replace platforms focused on sharing of good practices.

Recommendation 26

The sharing of purchase information on large or suspicious transactions of precursor materials may be best channelled through INTERPOL and WCO.

Raising awareness

81. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy³⁸ and the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674) provide comprehensive guidance on addressing some of the key root causes of increased IED misuse.

82. As components of IEDs nearly always include commercial goods, awareness-raising at the national level through contact with relevant industry sectors is of particular importance when addressing the issue of IEDs.

83. In many affected countries, the United Nations supports government and partners in integrating IED risk education activities into broader mine/ERW risk education programmes.

84. Programme Global Shield includes engagement with private industry to establish best-practice programmes on avoiding illicit diversion of precursor chemicals. For example, WCO has engaged in participation at the meetings of the International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA).

85. The United Nations is providing pre-deployment training on IED awareness to peacekeepers³⁹ alongside extensive risk education to impacted communities.

86. The Landmines, Explosive Remnants of War and IED Safety Handbook provides guidance on warning signs and clues, and basic safety advice for organizations and individuals.⁴⁰

Advocacy

87. United Nations advocacy with parties to a conflict can have an impact on IED use when backed by credible data and sustained engagement. For example, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has initiated advocacy in the form of dialogue with parties to the conflict in that country, regular public reporting on civilian casualties including casualties resulting from IED use, and statements of condemnation for particularly egregious or emblematic IED incidents. This advocacy was made possible through the systematic documentation of incidents causing civilian casualties in Afghanistan and sustained engagement by the Mission.

Response

Clearance

88. Clearance for humanitarian purposes of landmines, booby traps and other abandoned improvised explosive devices, in areas where active hostilities have ceased, is a prerequisite for safe returns of internally displaced persons and refugees. Apart from these direct factors, the possible use for IED components of unexploded ordnance left behind after conflict offers an additional rationale for prompt clearance.

89. With the increased use of IEDs, the United Nations and implementing partners, government mine action agencies, and national and international non-governmental organizations are increasingly requested to clear contaminated

³⁸ www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy.

³⁹ "United Nations overview of the improvised explosive device situation" (see footnote 17).

⁴⁰ Available at http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/Handbook_English.pdf.

areas. The scale of the problem is currently illustrated in the city of Ramadi in Iraq. As of April 2016, the city, after having been delivered from the occupation of Da'esh, remained 95 per cent uninhabitable because of threats posed by IEDs and other explosive remnants of war.

90. The existing United Nations Mine Action Service IED threat mitigation capacity provides the United Nations system with technical and advisory expert services on the detection, defeat and disposal of IEDs, as well as on post-blast investigations.

Recommendation 27

Member States should take into account the increasing complexity and scale of IED contamination in planning and programming humanitarian responses.

Recommendation 28

Member States should provide necessary support to relevant international and regional organizations and expert non-governmental organizations in the undertaking of rapid and effective clearance of IEDs and other explosive hazards.

Disrupting use, conducting forensic operations and gathering intelligence

91. IED post-blast investigations can provide essential information concerning the source and origin of components and other clues to the nature of the IEDs, as well as their users, producers and providers of components. Forensic capabilities to investigate IED attacks are thus essential for efforts to combat IED threats. The INTERPOL Chemical Awareness and Scene Management Project (CHASM) provides trained law enforcement officers with additional knowledge and skills to reinforce their capacity to identify, operate within and investigate crime scenes that are contaminated by chemical materials.

92. Within the United Nations, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force is mandated to strengthen coordination of the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system. A Task Force working group on border management and law enforcement also deals with questions of access to weapons.

93. Existing initiatives to prevent terrorism already include various measures to combat IEDs, and their effective implementation to combat terrorism would also have the beneficial effect of preventing IED attacks.

Recommendation 29

Further implementation of mechanisms and initiatives addressing terrorism such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2149, No. 37517), relevant Security Council resolutions, the sanctions regime concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is needed. At the same time, it would be beneficial for these initiatives and mechanisms to refocus on the issue of IEDs within the context of terrorism and on how terrorists acquire, produce and use IEDs.

94. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre aims at becoming a centre of excellence on counter-terrorism narratives, counter-radicalization, enhanced dialogue and cooperation between national development and security sectors, and terrorist use of the Internet. The Centres working with the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) on a joint border security initiative on gathering and disseminating good practices on border security and management in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa.

95. The International Bomb Data Center Working Group is a collaborative body of recognized government agencies focused on the sharing of technical intelligence on explosives as well as information related to their unlawful use. Currently, 40 nations participate in the working group, with 12 other countries granted observer status.

Recommendation 30

States affected by IED attacks should prioritize investments in forensic capabilities and receive assistance to that end.

Providing victim assistance

96. In Afghanistan, the fact that the number of civilians maimed by IEDs is twice the number of those killed, results in a situation where there are long-term medical and rehabilitation needs for civilians already suffering from protracted conflict.⁴¹

97. The United Nations Policy on Victim Assistance in Mine Action (2016) frames the work of the entities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in support of victims of mines and other explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions and IEDs.

98. The United Nations Landmines, Explosive Remnants of War and Improvised Explosive Devices Safety Handbook provides guidance on emergency assistance including evacuation and first aid. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has also developed Guidance on Child-focused Victim Assistance for Victims of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War, including IEDs, which applies to children, their families and their communities.

Recommendation 31

Victims of IED attacks should receive a full range of support actions including treatment for physical and psychological harm, as well as the long-term socioeconomic impact of their injuries. States should work to recognize and support the rights of victims in keeping with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. More research is required on the long-term and indirect harm inflicted by IED attacks.

Building capacity

99. IED-relevant technical and financial assistance would include strengthening of national control systems and border controls, and provision of legal assistance in establishing or improving controls over precursor materials. In its resolution 2220 (2015), the Security Council encouraged the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the

⁴¹ United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR), "Afghanistan: Annual Report 2015 — Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict" (Kabul, February 2016).

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, within their existing mandates and in close cooperation with all relevant United Nations counter-terrorism bodies, to focus on Member States' capacities and needs with respect to addressing the threats posed by accessibility of weapons used by terrorists, as well as to countering the supply and trafficking of weapons to terrorists.

100. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate is mandated to report within the existing reporting framework to the Counter-Terrorism Committee on gaps in such capacities, and to present concrete plans for facilitating technical assistance for strengthening Member States' capacities.

101. States Parties to Amended Protocol II launched a voluntary questionnaire on international cooperation in countering IEDs.⁴²

102. UNMAS has been providing support, training, mentorship and equipment to States and peacekeepers, in particular to infantry units and explosive ordnance disposal companies in missions in the Central African Republic, Iraq, Libya, Mali and Somalia. In Somalia, UNMAS has been training and equipping the African Union troops and the Somalia security forces in order to strengthen their capacities to deal with IEDs. In 2015, the first national IED defeat capacity was established within the Somali police force.

103. The United Nations is committed to the sustained transfer of mine action functions to national actors (A/70/207), including the capacity to address the issue of IEDs.

104. Post-blast investigation (PBI) often requires a combination of highly trained specialists, such as bomb squad technicians and forensic scientists, which may not be available in all countries. These countries would require international cooperation and assistance in developing these capacities. There have already been initiatives undertaken in this regard; for example, UNMAS has provided post-blast investigations training to the local Somali police.

105. For more than a decade, UNODC has been strengthening the capacity of the judiciary and law enforcement to deal with IEDs and dual-use chemical materials. This is achieved through targeted technical assistance to help, for example, improve, the management of terrorist crime scenes involving IEDs, organization of surveillance of storage and movement of dual-use chemical materials, and support provided to victims of terrorist attacks using IEDs. Furthermore, UNODC works to facilitate coordination and cooperation among the relevant international and national stakeholders and provides, upon request, equipment relevant to detection of IEDs.

Recommendation 32

Member States in a position to do so should provide affected countries with the information and technical, financial and material assistance needed to locate, remove and destroy IEDs; where needed, States should receive assistance in assessing their national commercial and military stockpiles and addressing the related risks.

⁴² CCW/APII/CONF.17/WP.1.



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World Social Situation 2016: Leaving No One Behind — the Imperative of Inclusive Development

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note provides an overview of *Report on the World Social Situation 2016* and sets out the report's main conclusions and policy recommendations. The full report is being issued as a United Nations sales publication.

* A/71/150.



I. Introduction

1. Humankind has achieved unprecedented social progress over the past decades. Poverty has declined dramatically across the world and people are healthier, more educated and better connected than ever before. Yet, progress has been uneven. Social and economic inequalities persist and, in many cases, have worsened. In every country, some individuals and groups confront barriers to full participation in economic, social and political life.

2. Against this backdrop of high inequalities, inclusiveness and shared prosperity have emerged as core aspirations under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹ A central pledge of the 2030 Agenda is to leave no one behind and to see all goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society, and to endeavour to reach the furthest behind first.² This core message echoes the commitment to foster social justice, equality and inclusion made by Governments at the World Summit for Social Development, 21 years ago, and is founded on the fundamental principle that development will not be sustainable unless it is inclusive.

3. The focus of the 2030 Agenda on inclusiveness underscores the need to identify who is being left behind and in what ways, which is what *Report on the World Social Situation 2016* sets out to do. Specifically, the report examines patterns of social exclusion and considers whether development processes have been inclusive, paying particular attention to the links among exclusion, poverty and employment trends. In so doing, the report hopes to stimulate research, action and a broader debate on the actions needed to leave no one behind.

II. Social inclusion and exclusion

4. Social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to fully participate in social, economic, political and cultural life, as well as the process leading to such a state.³ Participation may be hindered when people lack access to material resources, including income, or to employment, land, housing or services such as education and health care — essential foundations of well-being which are captured in the 2030 Agenda. Yet, it is also limited when people do not have voice and cannot exercise their rights and when their dignity is not accorded equal respect. Thus, social exclusion entails both material deprivation and feelings of alienation, inferiority and lack of agency or control over important decisions. Poverty is therefore an important dimension of exclusion, but not the only one. People are often excluded owing, for instance, to a disability or because of their sexual orientation without necessarily living in poverty.

5. Under target 10.2 of the 2030 Agenda, which is to fulfil the aspiration to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all members of society by 2030, attention is drawn and emphasis given to attributes that have

¹ Resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

² Ibid., para. 4.

³ The general term “social exclusion” therefore refers, in both the present note and the forthcoming report, to the concept of lack of participation in or exclusion from economic, political, cultural, civic and/or social life, with lack of participation in political processes, in civic life or in the labour market being considered a symptom of overall social exclusion.

considerable influence on the risk of exclusion, namely, "age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status".⁴ Indeed, an individual's chances in life depend significantly on group ascription, although the extent of exclusion suffered by groups depends heavily on the institutions, norms and policies in place.

6. Within this context, the report perceives social inclusion as the process of improving the terms of participation in society of people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. It contends that promoting social inclusion requires both removing barriers to people's participation, including certain laws, policies and institutions as well as discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and taking active inclusionary steps to facilitate such participation.

7. Identifying a set of criteria for determining who is excluded and in what ways is key to tracking progress and assessing the impact of measures taken to promote inclusion and ensure that no one is left behind. Measuring social exclusion across countries, however, poses considerable challenges for several reasons. First, people are excluded from many domains of life — social, economic, political, civic and spatial — and the salience of each domain depends heavily on country context, as well as on a person's stage in the life cycle. That is to say, the concepts of social inclusion and exclusion are multidimensional and context-dependent, and translating them into a limited set of measurable indicators applicable across countries is difficult. Furthermore, while an adequate assessment of exclusion requires objective indicators of the status of individuals and social groups, it must also take into account their subjective judgments and perceptions. Second, data needed to measure the multiple dimensions of exclusion are generally derived from a variety of sources which differ in terms of scope and purpose. The resulting lack of data comparability hampers comprehensive international assessments and the review of trends over time. Third, not all social groups are statistically visible or accounted for. For example, assessments of social exclusion rely primarily on household surveys which, by design, omit groups at high risk of exclusion and poverty, namely, homeless persons, people in institutions, and mobile, nomadic and pastoralist populations, while underrepresenting other groups.

8. Taking these challenges into account, the report examines three sets of indicators: those that measure access to opportunities, namely, education, health services and infrastructure; those that measure access to employment and income; and those that measure participation in political, civic and cultural life. It takes a relative approach to exclusion: instead of establishing a threshold under which individuals or groups would be considered excluded, it interprets the disparities revealed by those indicators across selected groups as symptoms or outcomes of the exclusion of those who are lagging behind or participating less.

9. It is clear that the extent of social exclusion, the groups affected by it and the social problems it encompasses vary not only by context but also over time. The report highlights the impact on exclusion of major trends in climate change; demographic change; and technological change, namely, advances in information and communications technologies (ICT), recognizing that, in many ways, the world has become less tolerant of exclusion over time. Through the spread of democratic

⁴ Resolution 70/1, Goal 10, target 10.2.

ideals and the demand for equal rights, some Governments have been led to loosen policies that sustain unfair treatment and have created opportunities for political participation. Meanwhile, the expansion of education and improvements in ICT are enabling more people to make more informed choices and exercise voice. However, these advances have not been sufficient to eliminate disadvantages and promote inclusive societies. Recent political events, including policy responses to the large movements of people seeking to escape war and destitution in their own country, as well as the effects of climate change, challenge the promotion of inclusive development.

III. Key dimensions of exclusion

10. The critical linkages among poverty, economic inequality, decent-work deficits and social exclusion have been well acknowledged in the international policy arena. At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in March 1995, Governments recognized that the common pursuit of social development aimed at social justice and equality requires not only the fostering of social integration, but also the eradication of poverty and the promotion of full employment. Through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Governments and the international community at large have reaffirmed with renewed urgency that striving for an inclusive world means addressing several interdependent goals, including the eradication of poverty, the reduction of inequalities, the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all.

A. Poverty, income inequality and exclusion: a vicious cycle

11. To the extent that material deprivation is a major hindrance to social inclusion, the global progress made in reducing extreme income poverty bodes well for inclusive development. While nearly half of the world's population lived in extreme poverty (currently measured at \$1.90 per day) in 1990, the proportion had declined to 12.7 per cent by 2012.⁵ However, additional data suggest caution in interpreting these global trends as an early indication of success in eradicating poverty. The evidence presented in the report suggests, for instance, that there has been little improvement in the situation of those living in deep poverty and that many people who have escaped poverty remain vulnerable to it.

12. Trends in inequality also suggest that prosperity has not been shared equitably, with income inequality having risen in many countries within the last 20 years. In general, income inequality across social groups constitutes a significant share of total income inequality, although its relative weight varies strongly by country. For instance, inequality between ethnic or racial groups accounted for over 50 per cent of total inequality in South Africa in the mid-2000s, 30-50 per cent of the total in Guatemala, Panama and Paraguay, and less than 15 per cent of total income

⁵ The World Bank released revised income poverty estimates based on a new set of purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factors and a corresponding new income poverty line of \$1.90 per day in October 2015.

inequality in many developed countries.⁶ Along similar lines, inequality between rural and urban populations explained over 50 per cent of total inequality in Senegal but less than 10 per cent in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and the Niger.⁷

B. Decent-work deficits and exclusion

13. Jobs constitute an important foundation for social inclusion, particularly when they provide sufficient earnings as well as access to social protection, decent working conditions and prospects for personal development. Beyond being an important source of income, employment often confers social identity and acceptance. In contexts of widespread poverty, even an informal job can bring social recognition as well as autonomy and agency.

14. Over the last two decades, labour-market participation has helped millions of people escape poverty and has economically empowered women and other disadvantaged groups. While in some cases, it has promoted the social inclusion of those groups, in others, it has reinforced existing divides. Overall, however, economic growth and, more broadly, development, have not been sufficiently inclusive, as they have failed to reduce decent-work deficits. Many individuals and families cannot rely on stable decent jobs as a means of coping with risks or ensuring secure livelihoods. The risk of holding a poorly paid, precarious or insecure job is higher today than it was in 1995. Rapid progress in reducing poverty notwithstanding, 13.5 per cent of workers in developing countries are living in extreme poverty (below \$1.90 a day), a figure that calls into question the notion that jobs — any jobs — are the main solution to poverty.⁸ A significant and persisting share of workers are outside the realm of regulation and have not been adequately represented in social dialogue and consensus-building processes within the world of work. While some informal jobs do become stepping stones to formal work and empower those who hold them, particularly women, most trap individuals and groups in a spiral of low productivity, poverty and exclusion. For instance, according to data for four developing countries — China (urban areas), Colombia (urban areas), South Africa and Turkey — only 8-35 per cent of workers in informal jobs transition to formal jobs annually, while the rest simply move on to other informal jobs.⁹ The probability of transitioning to unemployment or inactivity is higher among workers in informal employment than among those in formal employment. Decent-work deficits, in particular among young people, raise fears of social instability and put the social contract under threat.

⁶ World Bank, *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development* (Washington, D.C., 2005). See also Chris Elbers and others, "Re-interpreting sub-group inequality decompositions", World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, No. 3687 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, August 2005).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Transforming Jobs to End Poverty* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2016).

⁹ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD Employment Outlook 2015* (Paris, 2015).

IV. Who is being left behind and from what? Trends and patterns of social exclusion

15. The report confirms that attributes such as age, ethnicity, race, gender, place of residence and migration and disability status continue to affect the risk of being left behind in both rich and poor countries and can be the basis for precluding some groups from full participation in society. Yet, the risks faced by each of these groups do not result in uniform disadvantages across countries or regions: the extent of exclusion and its outcomes depend on context, including local institutions, norms and attitudes as well as the laws and policies in place.

16. While lagging behind in education or access to health services, or facing barriers to political participation, alone, cannot be equated with social exclusion, the report shows that disadvantages in all of these domains generally reinforce one another, which means that lower levels of health and education go hand in hand with higher levels of poverty and unemployment, as well as less of a voice in political and civic life. It is the accumulated disadvantages among certain social groups that the report takes as being symptomatic of their exclusion.

17. While the inequalities observed are often rooted in historical circumstances, they tend to persist, even after the structural conditions that created them have changed. The evidence presented shows that some ethnic groups continue to experience significant disadvantages in countries that no longer erect formal barriers to their participation. Nevertheless, discrimination continues to play a key role in holding some groups back, as the report also shows.

18. It is important to note that, while the analysis provided in the report is based on statistically visible groups, the groups that are omitted from household surveys and censuses are often those at the highest risk of being left behind. Often, it is when groups gain political recognition and social movements promote the enforcement of their rights that countries begin to identify them and make concrete efforts to include them in censuses and surveys.

A. Denial of opportunities

19. Equipped with education and health, people can acquire the skills and capabilities need to participate fully in all the dimensions of life. Access to these basic social services, which is therefore viewed as a fundamental right, defines life opportunities. Whereas many facets of high and persisting inequalities polarize political debates across countries, there is clear consensus on the need for education and health care to benefit all persons regardless of their circumstances — that is, consensus on the need for those services to be universally accessible. Yet, in both developed and developing countries, there are enduring disparities in school enrolment, educational attainment and learning outcomes based on factors external to a student's inherent capacity to learn, namely, ethnicity. In Europe, for example, at least 10 per cent of Roma children aged 7 to 15 were not in school in Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy and Romania in 2011, as compared with less than 5 per cent of non-Roma children.¹⁰ Regarding educational attainment, on average, in 19 countries

¹⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States: Survey Results at a Glance* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2012).

with data, the proportion of youth (aged 15 to 24) who have completed lower secondary education is twice as high among youth in the main ethnic group as among youth in the most disadvantaged ethnic minority.¹¹ Similarly, not all individuals and groups have benefited equally from improvements in health. Measures that take into account mortality, illness and functioning, such as health-adjusted life expectancy, tend to show wider gaps based on socioeconomic status or place of residence, than life expectancy at birth. Gaps in health-adjusted life expectancy based on socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, for instance, tend to be wider than those observed through life expectancy at birth.¹²

20. The analysis in the report highlights the need to monitor progress separately in different dimensions of social inclusion. It shows, for instance, that some social groups have seen more rapid reductions in child mortality, while others have benefited from relatively stronger reductions in malnutrition;¹³ and that progress in closing child health gaps among ethnic groups has not necessarily been mirrored by equitable improvements in access to infrastructure and vice versa.

B. Unequal income-generating prospects

21. There are also significant disparities in access to the labour market, employment opportunities, wages and overall income across social groups. Not only are disadvantaged groups more likely to live in poverty, but they experience deeper poverty and are more likely to remain in poverty over the long term than the rest of the population. In the labour market, indigenous peoples, members of other ethnic minorities and international migrants receive wages lower than those of the rest of the population, as do women, who, when working full time, earn on average 10-30 per cent less than men.¹⁴ The exclusion of youth from the labour market is of particular concern because of its long-term effect on well-being as well as its impact on social cohesion and stability. Over 40 per cent of the world's active youth are either unemployed or working but living in poverty.¹⁵ In countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) alone, almost

¹¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Inequality Database on Education. Available at <http://www.education-inequalities.org>. Accessed 22 July 2016. Average based on data from Afghanistan, Belize, Brazil, the Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, South Africa, Suriname, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Trinidad and Tobago.

¹² Eileen M. Crimmins and Aaron Hagedorn, "The socioeconomic gradient in healthy life expectancy", *Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, vol. 30, No. 1 (2010), pp. 305-321.

¹³ Andy Sumner, "The new face of poverty: How has the composition of poverty in low income and lower middle-income countries (excluding China) changed since the 1990s?", *IDS Working Paper*, No. 408 (Brighton, United Kingdom, Institute of Development Studies, November 2012).

¹⁴ Gillette H. Hall and Harry Anthony Patrinos, "Towards a better future for the world's indigenous peoples", in *Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Development*, Gillette H. Hall and Harry Anthony Patrinos, eds. (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012); OECD and European Union, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015: Settling In* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2015); and *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.XVII.8).

¹⁵ International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling Up Investments in Decent Jobs for Youth* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015).

39 million young people (15.5 per cent of all youth) were neither working nor in education or training in 2014.¹⁶

22. Labour-market disadvantages are not simply due to differences among workers in terms of their education, skills or place of residence. The report's analysis shows that most of the occupational differences observed among ethnic groups persist, for instance, once the effects of educational attainment and other sociodemographic characteristics are accounted for. The labour market continues to reflect socially driven distinctions based on ethnicity, race, age, gender and other personal attributes that should have no bearing on job opportunities or workers' competencies.

C. Unequal participation in political, civic and cultural life

23. Participation in political, civic and cultural activities is crucial to promoting inclusion. Individuals and groups who are excluded from participating in political or cultural processes also have limited voice or limited power to affect the attitudes, norms, institutions and policies that drive social exclusion in the first place. In addition, some forms of political and civic participation reveal subjective aspects of social inclusion that are not captured by merely assessing the socioeconomic status of individuals and groups.

24. In many countries, racial and ethnic minorities, migrants, women and young people vote less frequently and are less likely to be represented in government by individuals belonging to the same social group. Here, too, education and income lead to a higher level of political engagement as measured by voting behaviour. In some cases, lower voter turnout is also the result of institutional barriers to registering and voting — for one thing, the right to vote in a country is generally granted only to citizens. However, differences in voting patterns often remain even when formal restrictions imposed on voting are not present, suggesting that there are other barriers at play as well.

25. Lack of engagement in political activities among some individuals and groups is a cause for concern, undermining as it does the main foundations of democratic governance, namely, representation, rule of law and protection of freedom and rights. Data shown in the report indicate, for instance, that levels of trust and confidence in the police and the courts are lower among racial and ethnic minorities in several countries, which challenges the legitimacy of these institutions in protecting the rule of law for all and promoting good democratic governance.

26. In the context of participation in social life, social networks are an important source of support, power and agency for individuals, groups and communities that face multiple forms of social exclusion. Frequent contact with family, friends and neighbours provides social support which has positive effects on health and well-being. In many cases, members of vulnerable and marginalized groups enjoy participation in densely configured networks of community group relations. What they lack is the power and capital needed to achieve their ends.

¹⁶ OECD, Youth inactivity, OECD Data, 2015. Available at <https://data.oecd.org/youthinac/youth-not-in-education-or-employment-neet.htm>. Accessed 22 July 2016.

V. Prejudice and discrimination: barriers to social inclusion

27. The prejudicial treatment of people on the basis of their identity or their characteristics is a particularly pervasive cause of exclusion. Across countries, there are laws and policies that discriminate against individuals and groups in all spheres of life, although much has been done to put an end to the application of discriminatory laws in recent decades; nonetheless, discriminatory practices continue to underpin group-based differences even in cases where discriminatory laws have been eliminated.

28. Public registration of incidents of discrimination, for example, through legal action taken against employers or public authorities and reports of incidents of hate crimes, have limited value for cross-country comparisons or even for assessing time trends, as willingness and opportunities to report discrimination depend on the policy and social environment, including the efficacy, real or perceived, of the police and the justice system. Some surveys have, instead, assessed perceived instances of discrimination. Results of the European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey show, for instance, that in 2008, 1 in 4 respondents felt discriminated against owing to ethnic or immigrant origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, with perceived discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or immigrant origin being most significant in this regard.¹⁷ Field experiments combining experimental methods with field-based research also show large differentials in treatment based on race, ethnicity and migrant status in various domains, including in job interview call-backs, apartment rentals and examination results.

29. Persistent exposure to discrimination can lead individuals to internalize prejudice or stigma in the form of shame, poor self-esteem, fear, stress and poor mental and physical health. It may further affect achievement and diminish a person's sense of agency — that is, his or her capacity to make decisions and act on them. Thus, individuals can effectively behave in ways that conform to how others perceive them.

30. While discrimination is decried across the globe and there are legal obligations and guidelines to fight it, much work remains to be done on behalf of achieving a world free of discrimination and prejudice. Continued efforts to capture the extent, manifestations and effects of discrimination constitute a necessary step towards realizing this goal.

VI. Pathways towards social inclusion

31. The report concludes that despite many positive trends, ranging from broader representation of disadvantaged groups in political processes to a reduction of inequalities in access to education, group-based inequalities vary significantly across countries and by group. Whether development is leaving some people behind — and, consequently, whether or not it is promoting social inclusion — depends on context as well as on the indicators used to assess progress.

¹⁷ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS): Main Results Report* (2009). Available at http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/663-FRA-2011_EU_MIDIS_EN.pdf.

32. The report's analysis underscores the inextricable linkages among the objectives of achieving poverty eradication, full employment and decent work for all and social inclusion, core commitments to which were made at the World Summit for Social Development. Those objectives are now integral to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Summit's broad vision of social development as a process that involves a fairer distribution of opportunities and resources to foster social justice, equality and the participation of all people in social, economic and political processes strategically underpins the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The report further highlights the Summit's people-centred approach to development and the emphasis placed on integrated policy frameworks for tackling inequalities, which are also reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda.

33. There is growing recognition of the importance of inclusion for strengthening not only the social, but also the economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, this awareness has not yet translated into political commitment or the necessary normative shifts that, as the report argues, are imperative for inclusive development. Instead, over-reliance on market mechanisms, a retrenchment of the redistributive role of the State and growing economic inequalities have contributed to social exclusion and, over the last several decades, have even placed the social contract under threat in many crisis-ridden and fragile countries. Where identity-based disadvantage is deliberately supported by the dominant majority, Governments may not have been urged to tackle it. Yet, correcting asymmetries in power, voice and influence is not only the right thing to do, but necessary for promoting inclusive development, at both the national and global levels.

34. The commitment to leave no one behind, as expressed in the 2030 Agenda, is an important step in the right direction and echoes the commitment made at the World Summit for Social Development to ensuring that every individual participates in social, economic, political and cultural life with equal rights. But framing goals in universal terms, alone, does not ensure universality. For instance, despite the aim, under the Millennium Development Goals, to achieve universal primary education, some children were left behind, as the report shows. The extent to which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development helps to promote social inclusion will depend on the form and strength of its implementation.

35. The report's analysis shows that leaving no one behind calls for broadening opportunities to promote inclusion as well as tackling the structural barriers faced by excluded individuals and groups. The report discusses two main policy imperatives to reach this goal.

36. The first is to pursue a policy framework that is rooted in universal principles coupled with special measures aimed at addressing the obstacles that confront disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable groups. Special efforts are needed, even if temporarily, to overcome the barriers some groups face and make the universal provision of goods and services more effective in promoting social inclusion. Governments should design those measures in ways that minimize stigma and capture by local elites, and must integrate them fully into broader social protection systems. Policies aimed at tackling discrimination, as well as those that provide preferential access to some services, can enable the active participation of excluded persons and communities in policy dialogue and decision-making processes.

37. Identifying groups that are left behind and therefore in situations necessitating the application of special measures may require better household- and individual-level data, increased data disaggregation, and strengthened capacity of many statistical offices, as well as openness to new directions in innovative social research. However, where available, improved data alone have not driven all countries or organizations to address the barriers faced by disadvantaged groups. In contrast, some countries have effectively addressed such barriers with imperfect information. Ultimately, ensuring that all individuals are afforded the same rights and opportunities requires political will and commitment.

38. The second policy imperative is to promote inclusive institutions. The report highlights the fact that the role of institutions can be either to perpetuate exclusion or to promote inclusion. Empowering workers, entrepreneurs and small producers, for instance, or pursuing inclusive landownership schemes, new forms of collective action, or greater State capacity to engage in participatory budgeting, which allows citizens to identify, discuss and prioritize public spending projects, can make economic institutions more inclusive and equitable. Similarly, promoting civil registration and legal identity, engaging with civil society and enabling the creation of social movements and local associations can help political institutions become more transparent and inclusive. Finally, promoting recognition through anti-discrimination laws and their effective enforcement, encouraging tolerance of difference and diversity and challenging exclusionary values, attitudes and behaviours are all avenues of approach to more inclusive cultural and social institutions.

39. Reversing entrenched prejudice and reforming institutions that perpetuate exclusion entail an often slow long-term process dependent on national and local circumstances, norms and behaviours with deep historical and cultural roots. This will therefore require considerable normative shifts. However, concerted efforts and long-term political commitment at the highest level make such change possible.



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**New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in
implementation and international support**

New Partnership for Africa's Development: fourteenth consolidated progress report on implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Since its adoption 15 years ago, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has served as a framework for Africa's development, and has contributed to improved growth and social outcomes across the continent.

The present report, submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 70/295, coincides with the first year of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. At the continental level, following the adoption of the African Union Agenda 2063, the long-term strategic vision for the continent's transformative development over the next 50 years, and the adoption of its first 10-year implementation plan in June 2015, African countries have begun to implement the plan in earnest.

* A/71/150.



The report notes that the unfavourable global economic conditions during the review period, especially in trade and financing, pose a challenge to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the NEPAD agenda, threatening to derail the progress made through the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Despite the gains made through the implementation of NEPAD, African countries face a number of challenges, including weak agricultural productivity, limited diversification and lack of financing, all of which pose challenges to the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In this regard, African countries and their development partners need to intensify efforts to address challenges and to seize opportunities. This is important to preserving development gains and further accelerating progress towards inclusive growth and sustainable development.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/295, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the resolution to its seventy-first session.

2. The report highlights actions and policy measures undertaken by African countries and organizations in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as the complementary measures implemented by the international community, including support provided by the organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system during the past year. Where data allow, activities undertaken by the private sector and civil society organizations in support of NEPAD have also been highlighted. The report benefited from information provided by Member States, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism, the regional economic communities, the African Development Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), members of the Interdepartmental Task Force on African Affairs and other subregional and regional African stakeholders.

II. Action taken by African countries and organizations

3. Adopted in 2001 by African Heads of State and Government, NEPAD is an African-owned and African-led framework for the continent's socioeconomic revival. Spearheaded by African leaders, the framework represents an important paradigm shift in the way that African Governments and people conceive of their development. Despite progress in economic and social development, including in some Millennium Development Goals, persistent and emerging challenges remain, which, if not addressed, will hinder progress towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

4. Following the adoption of Agenda 2063 at the twenty-fourth African Union Summit in January 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the African Union also adopted the first 10-year implementation plan (2013-2023), which includes all of the priorities of NEPAD. The plan comprises key flagship programmes and projects for: the implementation of the Grand Inga Dam project; an integrated high-speed train network; an African virtual and e-university; formulation of a commodities strategy; establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area by 2017; the all-African Passport and free movement of people; establishment of a single African air transport market; establishment of the African financial institution; "Silencing the guns" by 2020; a Pan-African e-network; and an Africa outer space strategy.

5. The NEPAD Agency, as the technical arm of the African Union, in coordination with other structures of the African Union and regional economic communities, is focusing its efforts on the implementation of these programmes and projects through the provision of support to African countries for planning and implementation and for the monitoring and evaluation of their implementation. The Agency has also organized stakeholder consultations to develop a framework for the domestication of Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris

Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in national development frameworks, building enhanced capacities at national, regional and continental levels to coordinate the implementation of these agendas.

6. Agenda 2063 builds on the NEPAD experience, incorporating all of the Partnership's sectoral priorities as well as ongoing national and regional efforts towards its implementation. In June 2015, African Heads of State and Government reaffirmed that NEPAD is the strategic vehicle to accelerate the implementation of the Africa Union's regional integration agenda and recommitted themselves to exercising strong political will and determination to fast-track its implementation at all levels within the context of Agenda 2063.

7. Against this background, the continent has taken important steps towards realizing the NEPAD agenda, and ultimately the aspirations of Agenda 2063, by the launch, in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, in June 2015, of the Tripartite Free Trade Area, involving the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community, and the Southern African Development Community. The Tripartite Free Trade Area, which brings together 26 African countries spanning roughly half the continent, including 55 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP), is an important step towards strengthened regional trade and the realization of the Continental Free Trade Area envisioned in Agenda 2063. This, coupled with the launch of the Common External Tariff by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which became effective in January 2015, represents an important step towards the Continental Free Trade Area and the enhancement of intra-African trade.

8. Full realization of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063 will require concerted efforts by both African countries and the international community.

A. Infrastructure

9. In light of the fact that infrastructure inefficiencies cost countries in Africa billions of dollars every year, bridging the gap on infrastructure is vital in order to ensure sustainable development. During the reporting period, African countries continued implementing the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, which serves as the continent's overarching framework for infrastructure development.

10. Following the Dakar Financing Summit for Africa's Infrastructure, held in June 2014, the implementation of NEPAD's 16 "mega projects" started in earnest, including on the following four milestones: (a) the service delivery mechanism of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, which will enhance capacity for early-stage project preparation; (b) the launch of the round table for project preparation funds to further cooperation on funding continent-wide initiatives, such as the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, in partnership with the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa; (c) roll-out of a \$830 million in seed capital to 20 countries through the African Development Bank for project development and finance; and (d) the endorsement of the Continental Business Network, a high-level platform for private sector involvement in the projects launched under the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa in June 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa, on the side lines of the World Economic

Forum on Africa. The Network will act as an infrastructure investment advisory platform exclusively for African leaders and will provide thought-leadership for strategic policy issues.

11. Progress on the implementation of the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative also continued during the reporting period. Various components of the North-South corridor road/rail project are well under way. For instance, the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility is funding a feasibility study and engineering design for the 270 km missing link between the town of Kapoeta and Raad Road in South Sudan and the feasibility study of the Tunduma-Nakonde one-stop border post has been completed. Regional rail operators are preparing a blueprint on increasing rail freight volumes in the Zambia-South Africa corridor and taking steps to establish a regional locomotive and wagon leasing pool to address shortages. With respect to the "Missing link of the Trans-Sahara Highway" project, construction of the missing sections is progressing well and is on schedule for completion in 2016-2017.

12. Under the "Optic fibre from Algeria via Niger to Nigeria" project, while the Algeria section of the network from Algiers to the border with Niger has been completed and is now operational, in order to ensure high network availability, it will need to be reinforced and secured. Progress was also recorded on other projects, including the "Trans-Saharan gas pipeline" also known as the "Nigeria-Algeria gas pipeline". The Nigerian Government mobilized \$450 million through a Eurobond towards the financing of the project. The "Kinshasa-Brazzaville bridge road/rail" project is approaching request for tender stage, pending the completion of two workshops to finalize its design. With regard to the "Navigational line from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean Sea via the River Nile" project, the Government of Egypt completed a prefeasibility study in June 2015 in line with the original schedule in spite of the complexity of the project and the lack of outside funding. Kenya also joined the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative, promoting the implementation of the Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia transport corridor project.

13. Financing as well as weak coordination and capacity are key constraints to the development of infrastructure projects. On the financing for infrastructure front, the NEPAD Agency, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, worked to broaden domestic resource mobilization priorities beyond administrative improvements in tax collection to include novel and innovative financing instruments, such as regional infrastructure bonds, in order to leverage existing funds and resources.

B. Agriculture and food security

14. During the review period, African countries continued to make progress towards implementation of their commitments relating to agricultural development and food security, including the commitment contained in the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security to allocate at least 10 per cent of public expenditure to agriculture, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme commitment to achieve a 6 per cent annual growth rate in agricultural productivity and the commitments in the Malabo Declaration on Africa's

Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for a more targeted approach to achieving the vision of shared prosperity and improved livelihoods by 2025.

15. As of November 2015, 50 countries were actively engaged in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, with 44 countries having signed compacts and 29 having implemented national agriculture and food security investment plans. Mauritius signed its compact during the reporting period. To enhance the allocation of public financing to agriculture, the NEPAD Agency developed a methodology for integrating agriculture public expenditure processes into agriculture sector joint review processes. Regarding the 10 per cent budgetary target, according to the latest data, 12 countries have reached or surpassed the target, while 13 others are in the 5 per cent to 10 per cent range.¹

16. At the regional level, the NEPAD Agency supported the development of plans of the East African Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for regional agriculture investment. In addition, the Agency reviewed the regional agriculture investment plan of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and provided technical training to the statistics bureaux of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and of eight member States to test real-time data collection through the application of interactive templates in order to monitor high-impact indicators for Agenda 2063 and other continental and global commitments.

17. With respect to the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund for Food Security, since 2013, contributions have reached \$40 million, with Angola, Equatorial Guinea and civil society organizations from the Republic of Congo being the major financial contributors. To date, the fund has allocated \$34.5 million to 15 regional programmes and national projects that are being implemented in 36 countries to boost efforts to eradicate hunger and reduce malnutrition and poverty.

18. Regarding capacity-building activities, the NEPAD Agency deployed technical experts to six countries, including Chad, the Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Seychelles and Swaziland, to undertake independent technical reviews of their national agriculture investment plans. Capacities were also enhanced in agricultural skills and entrepreneurial and commercial knowledge for trainers, youth and women in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Togo, and cooling facilities were donated to six fishing villages in Cameroon to facilitate the preservation of fish.

19. With regard to food security, the NEPAD Agency, with support from the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the World Food Programme, continued to implement the policy recommendations of the "Cost of Hunger in Africa Study", which estimates the social and economic cost of undernutrition. Five additional studies were concluded in Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Madagascar and Malawi in 2015. The Agency also advocated increased public investment in nutrition.

20. While Africa has made progress in implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the commitments contained in the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security and the Malabo Declaration on Africa's Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation, countries continue to face a number of challenges, including inadequate financial support for the

¹ See A/69/163.

agriculture sector, coupled with the lack of capacity and policy coordination, and difficulty in translating political commitments into concrete action. Low agricultural productivity remains a perennial challenge contributing to food insecurity.

C. Health

21. Ensuring healthy lives is an important aspiration of the African Union. The NEPAD Agency continued to support the implementation of the Africa Health Strategy: 2016-2030, which is aimed at promoting healthy lives through ensuring availability of safe, good quality and reasonably priced medicines for African countries.

22. During the period under review, the NEPAD Agency continued to support the implementation of the African medicines regulatory harmonization programme, the objective of which is to establish and improve standards and requirements related to the regulation of and access to safe, high-quality medicines for the African population. This objective relates to the third goal of Agenda 2063 on "healthy and well-nourished citizens", and the targets in the first 10-year implementation plan aimed at improving people's access to quality affordable health care. Furthermore, at the continental level, the African Union is working to establish the African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention by 2023, and to harmonize the regulatory standards of medical products in the various African regions.

23. Progress also continued with the implementation of the African medicines regulatory harmonization programme at the subregional level. For example, the implementation of harmonized medical products regulatory standards in the East African Community came into effect in January 2015, and the regional medicines regulatory harmonization programme has been launched by the West African Health Organization and West African Economic and Monetary Union for the ECOWAS region. Furthermore, through the tripartite agreement between the NEPAD Agency, the World Bank and the secretariat of the Southern African Development Community, financial and technical support was provided to the States members of the Community for the implementation of their regional medicines regulatory harmonization programmes. Further work on the Central African regional harmonization programme is ongoing between ECCAS, the Organization of Coordination for the Control of Endemic Diseases in Central Africa, the World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa and the NEPAD Agency. The African medicines harmonization framework should be completed and operational by 2017.

24. The NEPAD Agency also embarked on efforts to coordinate the preparation of a research and innovation policy and strategy for health, which will be integrated into the updated African Health Strategy 2016-2030. In addition, \$5.53 million in funding has been mobilized for the institutional support of the Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa, established as a platform for developing science strategies and funding health research in Africa.

25. In the fight against Ebola, the NEPAD Agency led efforts to mobilize action by African countries and to establish a favourable environment for conducting clinical trials to test potential Ebola vaccines and other forms of therapy. Furthermore, regional technical working groups provided oversight on clinical trials for candidate Ebola vaccines in the East and West Africa regions. The majority of countries with

the worst indicators for maternal mortality, infant mortality, communicable disease morbidity and mortality are still in Africa.

D. Education and training

26. Human capital development remains a key priority for Africa, one which African Governments have sought to address through the implementation of NEPAD. Building on the progress achieved, Agenda 2063 recognizes "well-educated citizens" and a "skills revolution" as key prerequisites for realizing the vision of the "Africa We Want" by 2063. The first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 sets ambitious targets for 2023, including national targets of having 100 per cent rates of enrolment in secondary schools and basic education.

27. Working through the NEPAD Agency, and in coordination with its programmes, the African Union has advocated the importance of African countries sustaining their investment in education and vocational training in order to ensure, in particular, that students receive education and training that provides them with the skills required by the labour markets. The Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015) Plan of Action and the African Youth Decade (2009-2018) Plan of Action are important frameworks for promoting education and youth development in Africa.

28. The main milestone in the area of education and training during the period under review was the design of a continental youth employment programme, geared towards the engagement of youth in gainful employment through skills development. In addition, the NEPAD agricultural education and training programme, aimed at developing requisite skills for the agriculture sector, is now operational.

29. In 2015, there were 100 graduates, from Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and the Sudan, from the nursing and midwifery programme, a specialized skills programme designed to deliver high quality primary health-care services in Africa. Despite progress in the area of education, however, outcomes, as measured in terms of skills and knowledge, have been less than satisfactory.

E. Environment and tourism

30. Africa continues to bear the brunt of the adverse impacts of climate change, and the continent will require significant resources for climate adaptation and mitigation. In recognition of this challenge, African countries are committed to addressing climate change as a priority. Agenda 2063 calls for an "environment and ecosystems that are healthy and preserved, and climate resilient economies and communities". Furthermore, the 10-year implementation plan places emphasis on climate change, including the implementation of an African strategy on climate change, operationalization of the Africa Climate Change Fund, utilization of climate resilient agricultural practices and strengthening climate adaptation, resilience and education.

31. At the national level, the NEPAD Agency continued to support African countries in their efforts to address the challenges of climate change. For instance, Ethiopia has received technical support from the Agency to undertake stock-taking and appraisal of its climate-smart agriculture programmes. Over a three-year period, the Africa Climate-Smart Agriculture Alliance is expected to reach over 200,000

households in the country. To date, platforms advancing climate-smart agricultural techniques for women have been established to support local adaptation and the scaling-up of such methods in 30 communes across five administrative regions.

32. In view of the importance of addressing climate change for Africa's development, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change and several Pan-African institutions, including the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, jointly organized Africa Day at the African Pavilion on the margins of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in 2015 in order to raise awareness of the challenges and possible solutions to climate change and to lay plans for future actions under the Paris Agreement, with a focus on Africa's intended nationally determined contributions, the African Clean Energy Corridor, the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative and climate-smart agriculture initiatives. As part of efforts geared at pursuing the target of having at least 25 million households practicing climate-smart agricultural practices by 2025, an Africa coordination platform was established. Other important milestones worth highlighting are: the Africa Adaptation Initiative, the Africa Climate Business Plan and the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, all of which were launched at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties.

33. On tourism, the NEPAD Agency and the World Tourism Organization (WTO) signed a memorandum of understanding at the 58th meeting of WTO Commission for Africa and the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production Sustainable Tourism Conference and Symposium. The objective of the memorandum is to enhance cooperation between the NEPAD Agency and WTO in the implementation of the NEPAD Tourism Action Plan. In addition, the partnership will help to promote tourism as a tool for development in Africa, in line with WTO priorities and the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063 on sustainable economic growth and inclusive development.

F. Information and communications technology

34. During the period under review, the NEPAD Agency continued to support African countries in the development of ICT. Actions focused on the four pillars of the NEPAD e-Africa programme, namely: (a) ICT infrastructure; (b) capacity development; (c) e-applications and services; and (d) an enabling environment and governance.

35. Regarding ICT infrastructure, the NEPAD Agency continued to support innovations in the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs), use of space technology and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), particularly as a tool for early warning for humanitarian preparedness. To that end, one of the projects under the Earth Observation theme is the Global Monitoring of Environment and Security in Africa, which is expected to start operations in 2017. The project will focus on building and improving the current Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa, with a view to enabling African countries to develop human, technical and institutional capacities for access to, and use of, Earth observation services to respond to environmental and security needs for sustainable growth.

36. On capacity-building, within the context of the African Union theme for 2015, "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063", the NEPAD/Spanish Fund for African Women's Empowerment supported 76 projects in 37 countries, directly benefiting over half a million African women in areas including ICTs, business skills and vocational training. In addition, the NEPAD Agency supported training efforts for States members of the African Union to develop capacity, in particular in collecting, managing and analysing African science, technology and innovation indicators. Countries that have benefitted from the training include Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Namibia, Niger, Togo, the Sudan and Zimbabwe.

37. Despite progress, barriers to ICT development persist, including weak infrastructure, high costs associated with relevant technologies and regulatory frameworks and limited institutional capacity.

G. Science, technology and innovation

38. Science, technology and innovation is an important programmatic priority area for NEPAD. Because the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action constitutes the framework for the development of science and technology in Africa, the NEPAD Agency continued to support African countries to implement the Plan of Action in the three interrelated areas of: capacity-building; knowledge production; and technological innovation.

39. Regarding capacity-building, the NEPAD Agency continued to support States members of the African Union in collecting, managing and analysing African science, technology and innovation indicators for tracking progress in the implementation of health policy instruments and the Sustainable Development Goals. The following countries benefitted from NEPAD support: Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Namibia, Niger, Togo, the Sudan and Zimbabwe.

40. The African Union recognizes the potential role of knowledge generation and its application in driving dynamic transformation of African economies. In this regard, during the review period, the NEPAD Agency continued to support measures aimed at promoting knowledge generation and innovation for sustainable development in African countries. The Agency mobilized €6.0 million in funding from the European Union to support capacity development, research and innovation in water and sanitation in the Southern and West Africa regions. In addition, study of the biosciences in the Southern Africa region was strengthened through funding support of €7.0 million from the Government of Finland and €2.5 million from the Government of South Africa.

41. Since 2009, through the African Biosafety Network of Expertise, the NEPAD Agency has continued to provide support to a number of African countries to help them strengthen their national biosafety systems, and in this time more than 2,500 regulators, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders have received biosafety training. In 2003, NEPAD helped to establish the African Institute for Mathematical Science as the first network of centres of excellence in mathematical sciences, enabling Africa's brightest students to become innovators who propel scientific, educational and economic self-sufficiency.

H. Gender mainstreaming, empowerment of women and civil society participation

42. Achieving women's empowerment and gender equality is indispensable to sustainable development, and they remain key priorities of the African Union. As part of its efforts to scale up progress towards women empowerment and gender equality through awareness-raising, with a view to mobilizing increased political commitment, the African Union designated 2015 the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063" and 2016 as the "African Year of Human Rights, with particular focus on the rights of women". The NEPAD Agency continued to support the implementation and mainstreaming of gender in African countries in the 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063.

43. At the regional level, the NEPAD Agency has been most involved in capacity assessments (especially in the extractives and industrialization sectors) and frameworks to implement policies to promote gender equality with strong accountability mechanisms through the African Mutual Accountability Standard. In particular, the Agency ensured the participation of Africa's regional economic communities in the second global partnership monitoring exercise and the Africa action plan on development effectiveness.

44. The NEPAD Agency provided capacity-building to seven countries (Benin, Burundi, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda), which contributed to strengthening their capacities in the application of country results frameworks for effective development cooperation. The Agency also provided support to Government institutions and civil society organizations, including women's grassroots organizations to strengthen their capacities in gender mainstreaming.

45. In order to ensure that there are additional resources to support development projects that address gender concerns in Africa, the NEPAD Agency, in collaboration with the Spanish Government, established the NEPAD/Spanish Fund for African Women's Empowerment. Since its inception in 2007, the Fund has contributed to women's economic empowerment through skills transfer, access to finance and the set-up of businesses and access to land. More than half-a-million women have benefited directly from the Fund. Despite this, lack of financing remains a serious challenge that undermines progress towards women's empowerment and gender equality.²

I. African Peer Review Mechanism

46. The African Peer Review Mechanism is a mutually agreed self-monitoring instrument established in 2003 by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee to strengthen governance in the areas of democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and socioeconomic development.

47. During the review period, African leaders committed themselves to revitalizing the mechanism, to ensuring its independence through the mobilization of adequate and predictable resources and to encouraging other States members of

² See A/70/176-S/2015/560.

the African Union to join the mechanism. A new Chief Executive Officer was appointed in February 2016 to encourage the revitalization process.

48. To date, 35 member States of the African Union have voluntarily joined the mechanism, including: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, the Congo, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. Of these, 18 countries (Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia) have completed their reviews, while three are currently at an advanced stage of the review process and will be peer-reviewed at the 27th African Peer Review Forum in Kigali in July 2016. Going forward, the urgent task for the Mechanism is the effective implementation of the national programmes of action arising from the peer review exercises.

49. At the institutional level, the African Peer Review secretariat is being strengthened by its integration into the African Union, along with the development of greater collaboration and synergy with the NEPAD Agency and other relevant organizations. In this regard, the African Peer Review Mechanism is being repositioned to effectively serve as the monitoring tool for Agenda 2063.

III. Response of the international community: building on the momentum of the international community support for Africa's development

A. Introduction

50. As is the case with many developing economies, global economic activities have considerable bearing on Africa economic outcome. For the period under review global economic activities remained subdued, with GDP growth declining to 3.1 per cent in 2015 down from 3.4 per cent in 2014. Emerging markets, which account for 70 per cent of global output recorded GDP growth rate of 4 per cent in 2015, the lowest since the global financial crisis of 2008-2009. Furthermore, a considerable decline in imports in many emerging economies and developing countries, especially China, has also affected global growth. All these unfavourable factors weighed heavily on Africa's growth performance, with GDP growth decelerating slightly from 3.7 per cent in 2014 to 3.6 per cent in 2015. The end of "the commodity super cycle", occasioned by the shift in China's structure of the economy away from investment in manufacturing towards consumption is likely to affect Africa's growth prospects in the medium term. The continued fragility of Africa's growth underscores the imperative of policies that promote diversification and the structural transformation of African economies.

51. The unfavourable global economic conditions, including reduced capital and trade flows, are likely to affect the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa. The historic adoption of the three global development frameworks in 2015, starting with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Control, signalled a renewed commitment to international cooperation that bodes well for the implementation of the Goals in Africa. However, success hinges crucially on the seriousness with which they are implemented, particularly the means of support for the implementation of the three global frameworks in Africa. So far, commitments made towards Africa's development have not been fully implemented and, if the current trend continues, Africa will find it difficult to reach the Goals by 2030.³

52. On 26 and 27 May 2016, Japan hosted the annual Group of Seven Summit in Ise-Shima. The leaders of the seven advanced economies welcomed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and undertook to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, especially in developing countries. They also committed themselves to tackling the challenge posed by migration and refugees through increased financial assistance to address the immediate and long-term needs of refugees and other displaced persons. On trade, the leaders committed themselves to forging ahead towards concluding negotiations on an ambitious, balanced and mutually beneficial Trade in Services Agreement by the end of 2016.

53. At the Group of 20 Summit, held in Antalya, Turkey, in November 2015, leaders committed themselves to undertaking a number of concrete actions to strengthen the global economy in order to make global growth more inclusive, enhance the resilience of the international financial system, mobilize investment to raise long-term growth and implement previous commitments on economic reforms, including in labour markets. Building on President Obama's "Feed the Future" initiative, which has mobilized \$22 billion in funding for agriculture, the Summit endorsed an action plan on food security and sustainable food systems aimed at improving food security and nutrition through ensuring the economic, social and environmental sustainability of food production and consumption. Data shows that through the "Feed the Future" initiative several African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda) that have benefitted from the initiative have seen declines in childhood stunting of between 9 per cent and 33 per cent. The Summit also endorsed the "Energy Access Action Plan" to help enhance access to electrical power in sub-Saharan Africa.

54. In Banjul, the Gambia, in June 2016, the ministerial meeting was convened to prepare for the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, to be held in Nairobi in August 2016, and to review the implementation of the commitments made at the Fifth Tokyo International Conference, held in Yokohama in 2013. During the meeting, Japan reported that a total \$21.7 billion out of the \$32 billion pledged at the Fifth Conference had been disbursed.

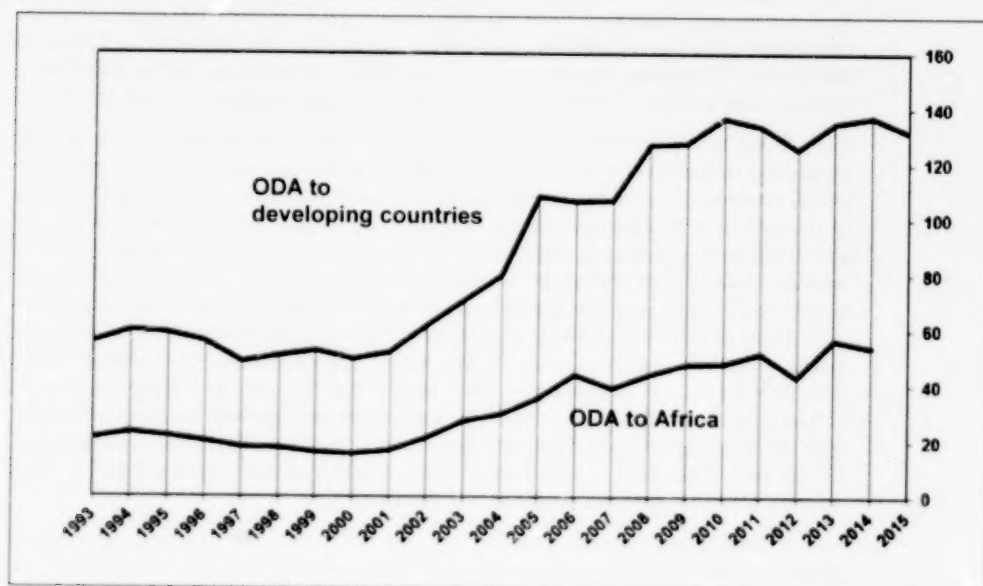
B. Official development assistance

55. According to the latest revised available data from the OECD, total net official development assistance (ODA) from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee declined from \$137.2 billion in 2014 to \$131.6 billion in 2015 (see figure 1). This represents a decline of 4.3 per cent over 2014. Net ODA disbursements from countries members of the Committee to African countries in 2014 totalled about \$53.8 billion, representing a decrease of 5.2 per cent from the 2013 net disbursement of \$56.7 billion.

³ See A/71/203.

56. In 2015, net ODA as per cent of the gross national income (GNI) of the member countries of the Development Assistance Committee was 0.30 per cent, virtually unchanged from 2014. Only six countries met or exceeded the 0.70 ODA/GNI target set out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Donors have reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of GNI as ODA and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNI as ODA for the least developed countries. They also pledged to reverse the decline in ODA to the least developed countries. ODA providers who have not met their commitments have been urged to step up efforts to increase their ODA and to make additional concrete efforts towards achieving the ODA targets.

Figure 1
Total ODA from all donors



Source: OECD/DAC online database, 2016.

57. On aid effectiveness, data released by OECD indicates some progress in reducing aid fragmentation. In 2013, member countries of the Development Assistance Committee channelled approximately 41 per cent of their total gross ODA through multilateral organizations, reaching \$59 billion after a two-year decline. However, volatility of funding is increasing as overall funding varies considerably from one year to the next, particularly for non-core resources.

58. In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Member States committed themselves to continuing their efforts to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation, including by making more progress on areas such as alignment of activities with national priorities, reducing fragmentation, accelerating the untying of aid, promoting country ownership and results orientation, strengthening country systems, strengthening partnerships for development, reducing transaction costs and increasing transparency and mutual accountability.

59. In light of the ongoing discussions on the modernization of the ODA measurement and on the proposed OECD measure of "total official support for sustainable development", in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda Member States committed themselves to the holding of open, inclusive and transparent discussions on the subject and affirmed that any such measure would not dilute commitments already made. Furthermore, in light of the central role of structural transformation and sustainable industrialization in both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, there is a need to reorient ODA towards the productive sector as well as to use it to catalyse private financing towards productive capacity development.

C. Debt relief

60. Addressing the debt burden of African countries is important for achieving sustainable development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognizes the need to assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability, including through fostering debt financing and sound debt management.

Current and potential beneficiaries of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (as of June 2016)

<i>Status</i>	<i>Countries</i>
30 post-completion point countries	Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia
3 pre-decision point countries	Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan

Source: International Monetary Fund.

61. As of June 2016, 30 African countries had reached the post-completion point and continued to receive full debt relief. Three other countries, namely, Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan, remained at the pre-decision phase. There is some progress on a Fund-supported programme for Eritrea. Representatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) visited Asmara in mid-February 2016 to initiate discussions on an IMF supported programme.

62. In the case of Somalia, the World Bank is currently working on the poverty reduction strategy paper process and documentation. Somalia had a successful article IV consultation in July 2015. IMF and the Somali authorities have also made significant progress in the development of initial GDP estimates, the preparation of the national budgets and financial accounting and reporting at the central bank.

63. The Sudan, which is still in arrears to IMF, the World Bank and the African Development Bank, will need to take all the steps needed to reach the decision point under the HIPC Initiative: (a) receive financing assurances from creditors for HIPC debt relief, (b) establish a track record of performance and (c) clear its arrears to IMF, the World Bank and the African Development Bank and have an arrears clearance plan with the remaining external creditors. At this stage, it is not possible to assign a firm timeline for the fulfilment of these steps, and, to date, there is no indication from the Sudan or from its creditors regarding such a timeline.

64. Commodity prices have continued to drop over the last two years, resulting in increased borrowing costs in African countries. Moreover, since global financial conditions are projected to remain constant in the short term, the cost of external debt will remain high, thereby resulting in reduced access to the sovereign bond market for African countries, particularly for countries like Angola, Nigeria and the Sudan and other major oil exporting countries in Africa. Since debt relief has contributed to the conditions that prevail in the African continent today, it will be important to maintain more accountability and transparency over countries' reasons for borrowing; to ascertain who is providing the assistance; and to provide more transparency on the terms of borrowing.⁴

65. With respect to debt sustainability, Africa's public debt-to-GDP is lower today than it has been in decades and overall fiscal policies are sustainable in most countries. Debt levels on the continent are comparable to those of other developing countries and below that of advanced economies.

D. Foreign direct investment and other private flows

66. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) World Investment Report 2016, global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows increased by 38 per cent in 2015, to an estimated \$1.76 trillion, their highest level since the global economic and financial crisis of 2008-2009, with cross-border mergers and acquisitions largely responsible for this increase.

67. However, FDI flows to Africa declined, from \$58 billion in 2014 to \$54 billion in 2015: a decline of 7 per cent. As a result, Africa's share in global FDI fell sharply from 4.6 per cent in 2014 to 3.1 per cent in 2015. While North Africa reversed the decline recorded in 2014, the decrease in FDI flows to the continent is largely due to a decline of FDI flows to Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly as a result of the drop in the price of oil and other primary commodities. The Central and West Africa subregions were the hardest hit by the decline in FDI flows in 2015.

68. FDI flows to North Africa increased in 2015 by 9 per cent, reaching \$12.6 billion, driven mainly by a 49 per cent increase in FDI flows to Egypt, which received \$6.9 billion, accounting for more than half of the FDI flows to the subregion. The financial industry, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, oil and automotive industries were among the key economic sectors that attracted FDI.

69. A decrease in FDI flows to Nigeria to \$3.1 billion in 2015, down from \$4.7 billion in 2014, has affected FDI flows to the West Africa subregion, which

⁴ www.brookings.edu/blogs/africa-in-focus/posts/2016/05/27-external-risks-to-african-growth-copley.

declined by 18 per cent to \$9.9 billion in 2015. Similarly, FDI flows to Central Africa dropped markedly, by 36 per cent to \$5.8 billion, mainly due to a sharp decline in FDI flows to commodity-rich countries. East Africa received \$7.8 billion in FDI in 2015, marking a moderate decrease of 2 per cent from 2014.

70. The role of multilateral and regional development banks in supporting regional integration and structural economic transformation in Africa was emphasized in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The Action Agenda urged multilateral and regional development banks to increase their support to projects and cooperation frameworks that foster regional and subregional integration, with special attention to Africa.

71. In addition, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognized the importance of mobilizing adequate financing for infrastructure development to promote inclusive growth and sustainable development.

E. Trade

72. Facilitating Africa's integration into the global economy through enhanced market access and support, including addressing supply side constraint, has always been an important objective of the international community. The total value of global exports at current prices amounted to \$16.5 trillion in 2015, representing a substantial decline of 13.2 per cent over 2014. Factors contributing to the decline in global exports include subdued demand for imports from emerging economies, drastic exchange rate fluctuations and a sharp decline in commodity prices.

73. Africa was heavily affected by the drop in commodity prices. According to UNCTAD, Africa's total exports declined by 29.6 per cent to \$388.3 billion in 2015, with a sharp drop in commodity prices negatively affecting Africa's resource-rich economies in particular.

74. The World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi in December 2015 culminated in the adoption of the "Nairobi package", comprising six ministerial decisions on the following matters: abolishment of farm export subsidies; establishment of public stockholding for food security purposes; a special safeguard mechanism for developing countries; introduction of measures related to cotton; preferential treatment for services exports of the least developed countries; and eligibility of the least developed countries for trade preferences.

75. Total aid-for-trade commitments reached \$54.4 billion in 2014. Commitments in aid-for-trade to Africa totalled \$18.2 billion, which constituted roughly one-third of global aid-for-trade commitments. Regarding the sectoral distribution of such commitments, energy generation and supply accounted for the largest share of aid-for-trade commitments and disbursements, making up 29.7 per cent of all aid-for-trade commitments to Africa, followed by the transport and storage sector and the agriculture sector at 24.0 per cent and 22.5 per cent, respectively.

F. South-South cooperation

76. South-South and triangular cooperation continued to be an important mechanism for driving Africa's development in all sectors, serving as a complement to North-South cooperation.

77. In July 2015, at the seventh summit of the BRICS countries (Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa), held in Ufa, Russian Federation, leaders of the five countries adopted the Ufa Declaration, the Ufa Action Plan and the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership. The Summit marked the entry into force of the BRICS financial institutions: the New Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement, with a total volume of \$200 billion. Cooperation was strengthened in the areas of: trade; investment; manufacturing; mineral processing; energy; agriculture; science, technology and innovation; finance; connectivity; and ICT.

78. In November 2015, the third Brazil-Africa Forum was held in Recife, Brazil, on the theme: "Challenges and opportunities for energy supply in Brazil and Africa". The Forum explored alternative energy sources in Africa and business opportunities for companies from different parts of the world, including how South-South Cooperation can support African countries in transition to adopt clean energy technologies for sustainable development.

79. In December 2015, relations between African countries and China were strengthened at the Johannesburg Summit/Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, at which the Declaration of the Johannesburg Summit and the Johannesburg Action Plan (2016-2018) were adopted. China announced 10 initiatives covering: industrialization, agricultural modernization, infrastructure, financial services, green development, trade and investment facilitation, poverty reduction and public welfare, public health, people-to-people exchanges and peace and security and made several important commitments: \$5 billion in free aid and interest-free loans; \$35 billion in preferential loans and export credit on more favourable terms; \$5 billion in additional capital for the China-Africa Development Fund; a special loan for the development of African small and medium-sized enterprises, and a China-Africa production capacity cooperation fund, with initial capital of \$10 billion.

IV. Support provided by the United Nations system

A. General

80. The United Nations system continued to strengthen its support for the implementation of NEPAD and the African Union strategic plans for the period 2014-2017, notably in the context of the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063", and the year of "Human rights, with particular focus on the rights of Women". The United Nations system also supported the African Union and its subregional institutions in the context of the preparation for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the formulation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

81. During the reviewed period, the United Nations adopted key development frameworks, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement. The African Union adopted Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan. Against this background, the United Nations system supported enhancing the synergies and complementarities between the regional and the global frameworks and facilitated the mainstreaming, domestication and implementation of all the development frameworks in Africa.

B. Strengthening of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa and of United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of the African Union and NEPAD

82. During the reporting period, the United Nations system took steps towards enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the cluster-system through the reconfiguration and alignment of the nine clusters of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa with Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan.

83. On 2 and 3 April 2016, at the seventeenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, held under the theme, "Toward an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals", members discussed the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals; the African Year of Human Rights with Particular Focus on the Rights of Women; movement, migration, youth and gender empowerment; regional integration, infrastructure and trade; and strengthening the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa for the effective implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

84. Representatives discussed the roles and responsibilities of each agency in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, particularly its first 10-year implementation plan, and called for the strengthening of partnerships, accountability, progressive monitoring and evaluation systems, and a transformative path to the economic development of Africa through the joint implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Goals.

85. Following the adoption of the first 10-year implementation plan by the African Union Summit in June 2015, the meeting considered the mechanism for implementing the framework on the United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda while ensuring that it is aligned with the 10-year implementation plan. The current 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union expires at the end of 2016.

86. In addition, at the seventeenth session, the Regional Coordination Mechanism cluster system was reconfigured to better respond to the priorities of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, adequate and predictable funding was requested to enhance the Mechanism's operational modalities for effectively implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, targets and priority areas. The new cluster configuration is as follows: (a) sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade and regional integration; (b) infrastructure development; (c) human capital development, health, science, technology and innovation; (d) labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility; (e) women and gender equality and youth empowerment; (f) humanitarian matters; (g) environment, urbanization and population; and (h) advocacy, information, communications and culture.

V. Conclusion and policy recommendations

87. African countries continued to implement their NEPAD priorities within the context of Agenda 2063, the long-term strategic framework for Africa's

transformative development over the next fifty years. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 has begun in earnest, building on the progress made through the implementation of NEPAD. This, coupled with previous gains made towards implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, has led to noticeable progress on the economic and social fronts.

88. Despite the difficult global economic environment in 2015, the international community continued to support the implementation of NEPAD through financing, trade, debt relief and South-South cooperation.

89. In light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and other global frameworks, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework on Climate Change as well as Agenda 2063, African countries and their development partners need to mainstream and domesticate these agendas into their national development frameworks. The effective implementation of these agendas will contribute to realization of the NEPAD priorities.

90. Despite improved economic growth in the last decade, growth momentum has slowed considerably in recent years. High rates of unemployment and pervasive poverty remain persistent challenges that undermine progress towards the implementation of the NEPAD agenda. In this regard, African countries, together with their development partners, should continue to take measures to strengthen the basis of growth while promoting social policies to address poverty and inequality in line with the vision of the 2030 Agenda of ensuring that no one is left behind. A supportive international environment will be critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa, including through ODA, FDI, trade and debt relief.

91. African countries need to build on the progress made in the health sector through the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and NEPAD to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all through increased financing, recruitment, development and training and retention of health workers. Building sustainable health systems capable of meeting current and future threats such as the one posed by Ebola will be key to ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all Africans.

92. Knowledge acquisition through education and learning is not only important for unleashing human potential, but is also critical to the dynamic transformation of economies. Despite progress made in primary education, including towards the goal of gender parity in primary education, educational outcomes have been less satisfactory. African countries need to promote knowledge and learning for sustainable development by ensuring that education provides skills and knowledge that will drive the dynamic structural transformation of African economies in line with the NEPAD agenda. Special focus should be placed on vocational and technical training in order to develop skills transferable to the workplace.

93. Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is vital to making progress on all other Sustainable Development Goals. Building on the gains made through the Millennium Development Goals and the NEPAD agenda, African countries need to advance progress towards gender equality through

ensuring women's full and effective participation in all spheres and enhancing their access to opportunities, including productive assets. Furthermore, given the cross-cutting nature of gender and women empowerment, women's rights need to be integrated across all ministries in African countries and not be the sole responsibility of specific national ministries responsible for gender issues.

94. Although African countries have made progress in recent years in promoting agricultural development through the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Programme, the sector remains heavily undercapitalized, with low agricultural productivity and food insecurity. Many countries are yet to meet the Programme target of allocating at least 10 per cent of their national budget to the sector, and donor support is minuscule, as only 7 per cent of ODA is allocated to agriculture. In this regard, African countries should increase public funding to agriculture. This should be complemented by international support through increased financing as well as support to strengthen agricultural research and development.

95. While African countries continue to take measures to invest in infrastructure development in the context of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, a substantial infrastructure deficit remains, which hobbles Africa's growth and sustainable development. As recognized in both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, the development of sustainable energy and resilient physical infrastructure are vital for sustained growth and sustainable development. In this regard, African countries need to further scale up investment in infrastructure through increased domestic resource mobilization, including unlocking private sector investment into the infrastructure sector. This must be combined with measures to ensure the quality of infrastructure investment outcomes through increased attention and diligence to project implementation and contract management.

96. Despite efforts to integrate African countries into the global economy, Africa's share of global trade has remained relatively stagnant, at 2 per cent. Furthermore, the sharp decline in commodity prices during the reviewed period affected negatively Africa's export performance, highlighting the continent's vulnerability to commodity price volatility. Therefore, African countries must accelerate measures to diversify their economies away from primary commodity to value-added products. International support through FDI, trade, technology transfer and innovation will be needed to help African countries transform their economies and achieve sustainable development.

97. While African countries continue to intensify their efforts towards regional integration, and ultimately towards the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area, as evidenced by the launch of the Tripartite Free Trade Area and the Common External Tariff by ECOWAS, further steps aimed at reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers will be critical to deepening regional integration on the continent. Given the large size of the service sector in African economies, substantial gains can result from the comprehensive liberalization of the services sector. In this regard, the liberalization of trade in services and regional services should be an integral part of Continental Free Trade Area process.

98. The global partnership has played an important role in the implementation of the NEPAD agenda over the last 15 years. Given the enormity of the challenge, as underscored by both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda

2063, a revitalized global partnership will be required to mobilize the means to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Africa, including through financial resources, capacity-building, trade and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

99. Climate change represents a threat to sustainable development in Africa, given the continent's vulnerability to environmental and climatic events. Against this backdrop, African countries need to take measures to mitigate the negative effects of and adapt to climate change. As reaffirmed in the Paris Agreement, developed countries should provide increased climate finance, coupled with technology transfer to African countries, to enable them to respond effectively to the menace posed by climate change to sustainable development in Africa.

100. The 2015 African Union Summit, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, endorsed the United Nations/African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda and called upon the United Nations to further enhance its cooperation with the African Union, especially in the context of the implementation of Agenda 2063. In the absence of the General Assembly resolution mandating the support of the United Nations system for Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, African countries may need to consider bringing the matter to the attention of the Assembly for appropriate action and support.



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Sustainable development

Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/208, the present report conveys views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, as well as identifying the appropriate intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system for further consideration and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures envisaged in the resolution. The information was drawn from responses of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations to the questionnaire circulated by the Secretariat on those topics as well as other available information.

* A/71/150.



I. Introduction

1. At its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/208, in which it invited the Secretary-General to continue to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on cooperative measures in order to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, as well as identifying the appropriate intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system for further consideration and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures envisaged in the resolution, building on and without duplicating existing activities, and with a view to achieving efficiency and synergies, taking into account the mandates and capacities of relevant international and regional organizations.
2. The General Assembly also invited the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-first session a report on the matters covered by the resolution, prepared using responses of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations, as well as other available information.
3. A questionnaire dated 4 May 2016 was circulated by the Secretariat in that regard to all Member States and relevant regional and international organizations, seeking their views on the topics mentioned above. Responses were then received from eight Member States, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Guatemala, Lithuania, Madagascar, Myanmar and the United States of America, as well as from the European Commission.
4. Responses were also received from the following United Nations system organizations and bodies, as well as other relevant regional and international organizations: the Joint Environment Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the UNEP Regional Seas Programme,¹ the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs, the Culture Sector of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM).

¹ Currently 18 Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans are involved in the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, of which 7 are administered by UNEP, including: the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention); the Action Plan for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the East Asian Seas; the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention); the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention); the Amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean (Nairobi Convention); the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region; and the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention).

5. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/208, the present report is prepared drawing on responses to the questionnaire as well as other available information.

II. Cooperative measures at the national, regional and global levels

A. Assessment and monitoring

6. Some recent activities to strengthen the assessment and monitoring of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea at the national, regional and global levels have been highlighted in the responses received. Those activities would contribute to the collective understanding of the issues related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea and to the cooperative measures envisaged in General Assembly resolution 68/208.

1. Activities undertaken by Member States

7. In its response, Lithuania stated that the key institution in Lithuania at the national level for the monitoring of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea was the Environmental Protection Agency. The initial investigation of chemical munitions in bottom sediments in the Lithuanian exclusive economic zone was conducted in 2003. Since 2003, the Agency had taken part in several international projects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, including:

(a) Chemical Munitions, Search and Assessment (CHEMSEA). A flagship project of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, CHEMSEA is financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme of the European Union. The assessment of the potential hazard of chemical munitions was made using data obtained from cruises at the dump site of the Lithuanian economic zone from 2012 to 2014. Arsenic concentrations, as an indicator of contamination by chemical warfare agents, were assessed in bottom sediments;

(b) Towards the Monitoring of Dumped Munitions Threat (MODUM). The project is funded by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Science for Peace and Security Programme. The aim of the project is to establish a monitoring network by observing chemical weapons dump sites using autonomous underwater vehicles and remotely operated underwater vehicles. Monitoring activities include habitat status evaluation, fish health studies and the modelling of possible threats to adjacent areas;

(c) Decision Aid for Marine Munitions (DAIMON). The project is financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme of the European Union.

8. Germany, in its response, stated that the Government supported a systematic approach to munitions in marine waters and strove to develop reliable methods for monitoring and assessment of areas with munitions and regions where munitions were deliberately dumped during and after the First and Second World Wars. Germany had established an expert group on munitions in marine waters, chaired by the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, which considered, for the German territorial

waters and the German part of the exclusive economic zone of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, questions regarding all sorts of dumped munitions and materials for war. The group met regularly for information exchange. The main responsible authorities were, besides the five federal German coastal states (Hamburg, Bremen, Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), the Government agencies for environment, transport and agriculture. The initial report of the expert group of more than 1,100 pages was published in 2011. Annual progress reports through 2015 were also available.

9. In view of the many singular aspects involved in munitions questions, in 2009 the German Government had established an informal federal network on munitions in marine waters, co-led by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, for enhanced political information exchange and, where needed, timely reactions by the Government regarding the burden of inherited munitions.

10. In 2009, Guatemala established a commission on oil spill contingencies, their derivatives and potentially harmful substances at sea as well as in regional marine coastal areas. The commission constituted an advisory body that would respond to the national response plan which would be responsible for managing national efforts; developing, updating and implementing national contingency plans in the field of oil spills, derivatives and hazardous and noxious substances at sea; coordinating with national and international institutions; and reviewing and auditing national and local contingency plans so that Guatemala would have the capacity to prevent and respond in an adequate way to spills of the substances mentioned. In 2015, Guatemala established the National Commission on Maritime Administration with the aim of inter-institutional coordination of the Government's activities on maritime issues, including recommendations on national maritime policies. The Commission was preparing the National Maritime Plan, which would include actions regarding the maritime environment and the rational and sustainable use of maritime resources.

11. At the regional level, within HELCOM, Germany served as Co-Chair of the Expert Group on Environmental Risks of Hazardous Submerged Objects (HELCOM SUBMERGED), which compiled and assessed information about all kinds of hazardous objects and assessed the associated risks. Since 2004, the German delegation had also regularly and systematically reported discoveries of munitions to the secretariat of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention).

2. The European Commission

12. According to the response from the European Commission, the European Union adopted the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in 2008, which provided for the achievement of good environmental status² of European Union marine waters by 2020. In relation to the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, it was for European Union member States

² In article three, the Directive defines good environmental status as, in part: "The environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive." Available from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32008L0056>.

to ensure that they complied with relevant international instruments dealing with the disposal of chemical weapons dumped at sea. The monitoring, preservation and, where necessary, remediation of ecosystems affected by substances was regulated by the applicable European Union and national health and environmental laws.

3. United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

13. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea highlighted in its response that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provided the framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. The Convention, in part XII on the protection and preservation of the marine environment, stated the general obligation for States to protect and preserve the marine environment. It required States to take, individually or jointly as appropriate, all measures consistent with the Convention that were necessary to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment from any source. These measures included, *inter alia*, those designed to minimize to the fullest possible extent the release of toxic, harmful or noxious substances, especially those which were persistent, from land-based sources, from or through the atmosphere or by dumping.

14. The Convention also included provisions on monitoring and environmental assessments requiring States, consistent with the rights of other States, to endeavour, as far as practicable, directly or through the competent international organizations, to observe, measure, evaluate and analyse, by recognized scientific methods, the risks or effects of pollution of the marine environment. States had the obligation to publish reports of the results obtained or provide such reports at appropriate intervals to the competent international organizations, which should make them available to all States.

15. In the context of the preparation of the annual report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea monitored and reported on developments relating to the protection and preservation of the marine environment, including various sources of pollution of the marine environment, such as dumping, and measures taken at the regional and global levels to prevent, reduce, and control pollutions of the marine environment, including chemical pollution.

16. In addition, in the context of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, established by the General Assembly to provide an overview of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects, the first global integrated marine assessment, also known as the first World Ocean Assessment, was launched in 2015 and welcomed with appreciation by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/235. The World Ocean Assessment included a specific chapter on waste.³

4. Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme

17. According to the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans regularly produced assessment reports on the state of the marine environment in the respective regions that identified regional priorities and emerging issues. The marine environment assessments reviewed different pollutions, including land-based and ship-based pollutions. Chemical munitions

³ See chapter 24, available from http://www.un.org/depts/los/global_reporting/WOA_RegProcess.htm.

functioned as a source of pollution to the marine environment and might have negative effects on humans and other life forms, including marine mammals and fish species. However, the environmental impacts of the dumping of chemical munitions were not well understood, especially with regard to long-term effects.

18. Among all seven UNEP-administered Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, only the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) had previously worked on issues related to the dumping of chemical munitions. The Barcelona Convention was adopted in 1976 and entered into force in 1978. It was an integral part of the Mediterranean Action Plan (1975). Participating countries included Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey. The European Union was also a participant.

19. Under the Mediterranean Action Plan, a report entitled "Ammunitions dumping sites in the Mediterranean Sea"⁴ was produced in 2007, which listed the main dumping sites of the Mediterranean Sea along with a map based on the information collected from questionnaires to contracting parties, literature reviews, nautical charts and sailor notices. The report also indicated that interviews with fishermen could be an important source of information to identify the location of the dumping sites.

5. Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter and its Protocol (London Convention and London Protocol)⁵

20. According to the response of IMO, the London Convention and London Protocol did not cover materials dumped before the entry into force of the Convention, but the issue of the dumping of obsolete ammunition had been on the agenda for more than two decades. Parties to the Convention (and subsequently the parties to the Protocol) were aware that, in the 1980s and 1990s, parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention) had considered the issue of chemical warfare munitions that were dumped in the Baltic Sea in the wake of the First and Second World Wars in some detail and had agreed to leave the munitions where they were dumped. The parties to the London Convention and London Protocol subsequently endorsed that policy and in the past had discussed the location of historical sites of obsolete munitions.

21. In 2014, the governing bodies of the London Convention and London Protocol endorsed the inclusion of the issue of cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea under the Joint Work Programme of the Scientific Groups, which meet annually, approximately six months before the meeting of the governing

⁴ Available from http://195.97.36.231/dbases/MEETING_DOCUMENTS/09WG337_Inf18_eng.pdf

⁵ The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention) was agreed in 1972 and entered into force in 1975. The Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Protocol) was agreed in 1996, entered into force in 2006, and will eventually replace the London Convention.

bodies, to advise the governing bodies on the scientific and technical aspects of any issue related to the Convention and Protocol.

22. The governing bodies of the London Convention and London Protocol endorsed the statement by the Scientific Groups that the Convention and Protocol had an important role to play in relation to chemical munitions dumped at sea and that the contracting parties as well as the secretariat should stay abreast of further developments. The governing bodies had instructed the secretariat to continue its outreach and dialogue with the regional bodies, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and other stakeholders, as well as with the General Assembly, on the matter.

6. **Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM)⁶**

23. HELCOM indicated in its response that the first targeted HELCOM activities on chemical munitions dumped at sea took place through the ad hoc Working Group on Dumped Chemical Munitions in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM CHEMU). The outcome was reported to HELCOM in 1995.⁷

24. The second round of action was through the ad hoc Expert Group to Update and Review the Existing Information on Dumped Chemical Munitions in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM MUNI). The outcome was published in 2013.⁸

25. The third round of action was the ongoing time-limited work of HELCOM SUBMERGED to complement earlier work on dumped chemical weapons, in accordance with its mandate for 2014-2016. The remit included the mapping and assessment of historic and current activities regarding dumped munitions and waste, wrecks and lost cargo in the Baltic Sea area. The current aim was to draft a report on those issues by the end of 2018.

7. **Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention)**

26. The European Commission highlighted the work of the OSPAR Commission, which was based on the legally binding OSPAR Convention. The OSPAR Commission had been studying the issue of dumped chemical and conventional munitions since 2000. It published a report entitled "Overview of past dumping at sea of chemical weapons and munitions in the OSPAR Maritime Area" in 2002 that

⁶ The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention) of 1992 aims to prevent pollution from ships (including dumping), pollution from land-based sources and pollution resulting from the exploration and exploitation of the seabed and its subsoil. The Convention also regulates the cooperation to respond to marine pollution by oil and other harmful substances. Current signatories are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the European Union.

⁷ HELCOM, "Final report of the ad hoc Working Group on Dumped Chemical Munitions (HELCOM CHEMU) to the 16th meeting of the Helsinki Commission (March 1995)". Available from <http://helcom.fi/Lists/Publications/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

⁸ HELCOM, "Chemical munitions dumped in the Baltic Sea: report of the ad hoc Expert Group to Update and Review the Existing Information on Dumped Chemical Munitions in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM MUNI)". Available from <http://helcom.fi/Lists/Publications/BSEP142.pdf>. See pages 89-91 for recommendations.

was subsequently updated in 2005 and again in 2010.⁹ Details of the locations, types and quantities of materials dumped were recorded in a database.

27. In 2003, the OSPAR Commission agreed on recommendation 2003/2 on a framework for reporting encounters with marine-dumped conventional and chemical munitions in the Convention area that was subsequently replaced by an updated recommendation 2010/20. The recommendation requested the reporting of encounters with chemical weapons and munitions dumped at sea so that they could be recorded in the database.

28. In 2004, the OSPAR Commission published an updated review of Convention-wide practices and procedures in relation to marine-dumped chemical weapons and munitions that included guidelines for fishermen and other users of the sea and its coastline. In 2007, the Commission published a report entitled "Implementation of OSPAR recommendation 2003/2 database on encounters with dumped conventional and chemical munitions". In 2008, the Commission published a report entitled "Assessment of the impact of dumped conventional and chemical munitions".

29. Despite a recent development on strengthening cooperative measures to assess and monitor the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, many in their responses mentioned that the full extent of the dumping of chemical munitions in the wake of the world wars would probably never be known, mainly owing to inadequate documentation of operations at the time of dumping and the subsequent loss of any records that might have been kept. Assessment of the environmental impacts of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea was therefore challenging, owing to the uncertainty surrounding the quantities, type, locations and present condition or stability of the materials.

B. Awareness-raising, information-sharing and capacity-building

30. Lithuania organized several international events on the issue of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea to raise awareness and share information, including: (a) a side event on chemical weapons dumped at sea, organized by the Polish and Lithuanian Permanent Representatives to OPCW, at the eighteenth Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention), at The Hague in 2013; (b) side events on chemical munitions dumped at sea, with Poland and the International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions, at the nineteenth Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, at The Hague in 2014; (c) multilateral consultations on the future of OPCW at The Hague in 2015; (d) a side event entitled "The re-emergence of chemical weapons: sea-dumped chemical weapons" at the twentieth Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, organized in cooperation with the International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions, at The Hague in 2015; and (e) a regional meeting on education and outreach in Eastern Europe in Vilnius in 2016.

31. Germany stated that it had established, in 2013, a centralized national registration office for dumped munitions and other discovered items at the Maritime

⁹ See the 2010 version, available from <http://www.ospar.org/documents?v=7258>

Safety and Security Centre in Cuxhaven. The Centre helped to ensure regular and uniformed documentation and simplified data exchange with the other services, including the underwater data centre of the German military services and the data centres of the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency. Discoveries of munitions were published each year in progress reports. Germany was also represented in international research and development, including the JPI Oceans programme, as part of a synergistic approach to the needs of the European Union.

32. Madagascar highlighted the ocean-based nature of its main economy and the importance of the safety of its marine environment, and expressed the need for capacity-building, including technical capacity for the assessment and monitoring of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, as well as relevant policy formulation and coordination.

33. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea had recently developed a comprehensive training course on the law of the sea, with a focus on the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea, including the rights and obligations of States with regard to the protection and preservation of the marine environment. Delivered at the national level, upon request, the course had so far benefited approximately 50 government representatives in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Somalia. In addition, in the context of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, established by the General Assembly, which aimed to provide an overview of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects, regional workshops had been held in support of the Regular Process as a key mechanism for the development of the first global integrated marine assessment and to help States enhance their assessment capacities. A preliminary inventory of existing opportunities and arrangements for capacity-building for assessments had also been developed in that context. The first global integrated marine assessment, also known as the first World Ocean Assessment, included chapters on capacity-building needs.

34. According to IMO, the governing bodies of the London Convention and London Protocol had attempted to bring relevant information on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea to the attention of fishermen and mariners in all States parties to the Convention and Protocol through the publishing of locational information and the provision of advice regarding the handling of such munitions if found in nets. Some maps identifying known dump sites in the Mediterranean Sea, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States and others had been made available. The International Hydrographic Organization included them in its charts.

35. HELCOM, through its HELCOM CHEMU, HELCOM MUNI and HELCOM SUBMERGED groups, had also conducted many awareness-raising, information-sharing and capacity-building activities. In the 2013 report of HELCOM MUNI, a number of relevant recommendations were made under the framework entitled "Investigate, manage and inform". HELCOM SUBMERGED had a response working group (HELCOM RESPONSE) dedicated to spill-response issues. The work of HELCOM RESPONSE included preparedness and response to incidents of hazardous substance spills, including those involving materials intended for chemical warfare. It was mentioned that regular data collection on hazardous underwater objects (munitions, wrecks and other dumped objects) had been raised within HELCOM SUBMERGED as a possible new area for further development.

C. Partnerships and cooperation

36. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea emphasized that the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on global and regional cooperation required States to cooperate, directly or through competent international organizations, for the purpose of promoting studies, undertaking programmes of scientific research and encouraging the exchange of information and data acquired about pollution of the marine environment. States must endeavour to participate actively in regional and global programmes to acquire knowledge for the assessment of the nature and extent of pollution, exposure to it, and its pathways, risks and remedies.

37. In addition, States were required, when they became aware of cases in which the marine environment was in imminent danger of being damaged or had been damaged by pollution, to immediately notify other States that they deemed likely to be affected by such damage, as well as the competent international organizations. States in the area affected, in accordance with their capabilities, and the competent international organizations must cooperate, to the extent possible, in eliminating the effects of pollution and preventing or minimizing the damage. To that end, States must jointly develop and promote contingency plans for responding to pollution incidents in the marine environment.

38. The Joint Environment Unit of UNEP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs emphasized its ability to facilitate the provision of technical support in the form of rapid environmental assessments and/or on-site sampling and analysis and/or technical expert deployments to Member States affected by an emergency caused by waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. In the event that such waste would cause an emergency and corresponding humanitarian needs overwhelm the response capacity of a concerned State, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs could be called upon to mobilize and coordinate international emergency assistance with the services of a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team.

39. The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team is a team of volunteer emergency response specialists with varied skills from approximately 80 participating countries and some 20 United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Team had proven effective in facilitating the coordination of incoming international humanitarian assistance through the set-up of an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre.

40. It was also mentioned that the role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs included the promotion of humanitarian civil-military coordination. The Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief (Oslo Guidelines) provided advice on how to ensure that foreign military and defence assets supported and complemented the relief operation without compromising principled humanitarian action.

41. The internationally agreed Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies (MCDA Guidelines) spelled out principles and concepts for coordination with the military in that context. The Guidelines should also be referred to when considering the use of foreign military assets in response to incidents involving waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

42. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme shared that different Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans had started developing cooperation with the regional fishery bodies and that the issue could be brought to the attention of relevant stakeholders together with the regional fishery bodies, as waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea had negative impacts on fishermen as well as on the marine environment.

43. IMO highlighted that contacts had been established between its secretariat and OPCW, the OSPAR Commission and HELCOM SUBMERGED, which was dealing with munitions in the Baltic Sea that had been dumped there before its establishment.

44. The secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage of 2001, adopted at the thirty-first session of the General Conference of UNESCO, pointed out that it provided expert assistance as well as capacity-building and facilitated cooperation in the domain of underwater cultural heritage protection. In certain, though rare, cases, the secretariat was also concerned with sites that contained waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, and synergies might arise. UNESCO also mentioned that it had established a wide network in the domain of underwater archaeology, joining together 15 accredited non-governmental organizations, more than 20 universities, a scientific and technical advisory body and more than 50 competent authorities. As it was often underwater archaeologists who comprehensively inventoried wrecks and material-deposit sites, they were generally in the best position to contribute evaluations of their risk and significance. Risk management measures in the protection and management regimes of the sites, and the education of local people and visiting recreational divers about non-intrusive safe access to the sites, was part of their work. They also closely monitored, in cooperation with conservators, the decay of metal parts of wrecks and rusticle formation. They could therefore give comprehensive advice on the issue.

45. HELCOM shared that both HELCOM RESPONSE and HELCOM SUBMERGED were involving not only national governments but also industry and civil society members in their work. The HELCOM groups HELCOM CHEMU, HELCOM MUNI and HELCOM SUBMERGED had contributed the most concrete activities, involving regional meetings of experts to share knowledge and create a regional synthesis on the issues.

III. Way forward

A. Views on the possibility of establishing a database and its institutional framework

46. General Assembly resolution 68/208 invited the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database. The resolution indicated that such a database could contain relevant and voluntarily shared information on, inter alia, the location of dumping sites, the type, quantity and, to the extent possible, the current condition of chemical munitions, the recorded environmental impact, best practices on risk prevention and response to incidents or accidental

encounters and destruction or impact-reduction technologies, including by means of data collection and management.

47. Some responses to the questionnaire expressed support on establishing such a database and willingness to contribute to its best possible outcome.
48. Lithuania pointed out that a database for waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea on the basis of the CHEMSEA project had already been created and that at present the database was being upgraded. Croatia called for the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and their databases to be taken into consideration when developing such a database at the global level.
49. IMO mentioned that the governing bodies of the London Convention and London Protocol had instructed its Scientific Groups to undertake the necessary preparatory work to identify the various sources of data that could feed into a future database on chemical munitions dumped at sea. More specifically, IMO pointed out that there already were regional databases that could be built on or used as examples, for example the OSPAR database, and there also were global databases to which governments could submit information in relation to global treaties on other and related issues.
50. IMO pointed out that its Global Integrated Shipping Information System, for example, was an established online system for the reporting of issues related to shipping, as well as a module on the reporting of dumping of waste at sea that allowed for geographical entries and maps or links to reports, which was accessible to IMO member States and, to a limited extent, the public. With the development of a new interface to allow public extraction of relevant chemical munitions dumping sites, it could be explored as an option for the proposed database, although at present IMO did not have sufficient resources for such development.
51. The Joint Environment Unit of UNEP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs pointed out that such a database could also support risk reduction measures, as well as preparedness for response, by serving as a repository for information on best practices on risk prevention and response to incidents and linking to existing emergency and humanitarian response procedures and guidelines.
52. In terms of the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, Myanmar suggested OPCW. Lithuania also had a similar suggestion, stating that OPCW and its technical secretariat should be the most appropriate framework for such a database. Madagascar suggested that establishing such a database should be country-driven, and at the national level government ministries in charge of environment should act as a neutral medium.
53. Germany, however, expressed an objection to the idea of establishing such a database, based on an overall disagreement with any proposal that focused only on the environmental effects of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. Recognizing the complex nature of that waste, Germany stated that it supported a more systematic approach and did not see dumped chemical weapons as an environmental problem as such. Although the Government of Germany did participate in various international activities on munitions in marine waters, the Government regarded ideas for an international munitions database or any international comprehensive and systematic data collection of munitions and warfare as a non-option.

54. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme highlighted that data were not available in most of the regions and the development of a database in terms of location and distribution of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea would be difficult, and that the environmental effects of such waste were not well understood. The data were often held by ministries of defence or the military, and literature and previous reports would serve as the basis of the data. The UNEP Regional Seas Programme stressed that, therefore, the ability to allow information-sharing between different sectoral organizations, including defence, transportation and environment, was a key factor to consider when choosing an appropriate institutional framework for the database.

55. HELCOM indicated that it did not have a coordinated view on the matter. HELCOM stated that it had several regional databases and, if its contracting parties so decided, those regional databases could be organized for chemical munitions. Regional datasets on hazardous underwater objects (munitions, wrecks and other dumped objects) were being created and had been mentioned within HELCOM SUBMERGED as possible new developments. Even if data could be administered and collected within regions or locally, a global common structure and nomenclature could be a good way to share the information between regions and for global purposes.

B. Views on the appropriate intergovernmental bodies for further consideration and implementation of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea

56. In its resolution 68/208, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on the appropriate intergovernmental bodies for further consideration and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea envisaged in the resolution.

57. Lithuania suggested that either the General Assembly or OPCW, as the only specialized body that dealt with chemical weapons, could effectively respond to the threats of chemical weapons dumped at sea.

58. Similarly, Myanmar supported OPCW as the most appropriate intergovernmental body for further consideration and implementation of relevant issues.

59. Madagascar was of the view that the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, in conjunction with the Chemicals and Waste Branch of UNEP, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, should take the lead.

60. Guatemala was of the view that IMO should be the intergovernmental body for further consideration and implementation of issues related to the cooperative measures envisioned in General Assembly resolution 68/208.

61. Germany was of the view that existing regional and other instruments were efficient and sufficient, and therefore did not support the idea that any new or other United Nations bodies should take over responsibility for such activities. Germany also stated that, in the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 65/149, in March 2015 the OPCW secretariat had proposed in a vision paper, entitled "The OPCW in 2025: ensuring a world free of chemical weapons", to act as a platform for neutral discussion.

62. IMO emphasized that anybody tasked with the issue should have a global mandate in relation to the issue. Given the role of the London Convention and London Protocol as the main global regulatory mechanism for the dumping of wastes and other matters at sea, it would seem appropriate that such a cooperative measure should fall under the remit of that Convention and Protocol. It was mentioned that a joint initiative or cooperation with OPCW could be explored as an option.

63. HELCOM did not have a coordinated view on the matter. HELCOM and the UNEP Regional Seas Programme both highlighted their experience and the potential inputs they could provide to any global organizational set-up.

64. Other Member States and relevant regional and international organizations did not express any specific views on the matter.